ARNOLD ZULIG,

A

SWISS STORY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

CONSTANCE, PHAROS, AND ARGUS.

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ARNOLD ZULIG.

CHAP. I.

IN the canton of Underwalden, and on the margin of the beautiful lake of Lucerne, dwelt, in peace and reputation, *Arnold Zulig*. For many generations the ſmall patrimony of his family had maintained its poſſeſſors in the neceſſary comforts of life; nor had ambition ever excited or want impelled them to ſeek abroad for honours or for riches. Their

needs and their wiſhes were all ſupplied and fulfilled nearly on the ſame ſpot: immediately under their eye, Nature and Induſtry preſented whatever contributes to the ſupport of exiſtence; and a viſit to a neighbouring canton, or an excurſion to a neighbouring mountain, from whoſe ſnow-crowned ſummit they could behold the ſtretch of Alps and the expanſe of lakes which give to Switzerland the appellations of ſtupendous and ſublime, filled up all that vaſt pauſe which the inhabitants of countries, where luxury has found leſs reſiſtance, feel between the periods of calm ſatisfaction and tumultuous delight. The viſual faculty never judges of its own imperfection ſo truly as in a ſurvey of the landſcape of this country; not only are the objects too large for the eye or the mind to comprehend, but even the variety, the diffuſion of fertility in the midſt of barrenneſs, the tremendous heights, the inviting plains, and the profound

profound vallies, contraſted with each other, ſo impreſs the ſenſes with the idea of omnipotence and beneficence in the Divine Hand that thus corrected Chaos, that the faculties refuſe their ſervice, and the aſtoniſhed intellect, cloſing its ſight againſt the oppreſſive glory, ſinks down in awe and admiration.

The time when Arnold Zulig lived was unfavourable to the continuance of the repoſe he had inherited. It was then that the kingdom of France was torn by the convulſions of a civil war, in which religion was the pretext, and ambition ſtimulated by jealouſy the real motive.

It was in that effuſion of blood which almoſt drained the veins of France, that the Switzers were looked to as allies and mercenaries, and Frenchmen of rank and conſideration were diſperſed throughout

Underwalden, and the other Catholic cantons, with a view of inſpiring the young men with an ardour for the laurels of Gallia. Arnold's heart beat high for military glory; he was in the vigour of manhood, and when his ſpirit was once rouſed, his life appeared to him a ſtate of criminal inactivity. "'Tis true," ſaid he to himſelf, "I labour; my hours are not ſpent in idleneſs; but to what purpoſe do I labour? for the maintenance of the narrow circle of my own ſmall family; whereas theſe brave men who are now fighting in defence of their country and its eſtabliſhed government, are doing good, not only to thoſe who live in the ſame age with them, but are ſowing bleſſings which their poſterity ſhall reap in an abundant harveſt."

Againſt theſe reflections, and againſt the natural bent of Arnold's temper, there weighed what nearly turned the

ſcale. He had a wife the friend of his boſom, the object of his ardent love, and the ſoother of all his diſquietudes. He had beſide, an infant ſon yet in the cradle, and when Arnold embraced the one or careſſed the other, he was aſtoniſhed that a thought of ſeparation had ever entered his mind; he deteſted himſelf for harbouring an idea ſo repugnant to the tender feelings of his relative ſituation, and after every conflict of this kind, his fondneſs for Bertolda and her Almeric was always increaſed.

But thoſe whoſe buſineſs it was to ſeduce the moſt active of the Switzers to a participation in the inteſtine wars of France, had already perceived the ſpirit of Arnold duly fitted to their purpoſe: they had, at the firſt interview, diſcovered his paſſion for arms, and farther acquaintance with him and his tribe proved that his influence extended much beyond his poſſeſſions: they,

therefore, increaſed their temptations in every poſſible way, and at length not only prevailed on him to engage with them, but uſed his perſuaſion and example to induce others in like manner to join them.

The grief of Bertolda, when ſhe heard his reſolution, was almoſt madneſs. She had not been entruſted with what had paſſed in his mind, and immerſed in the cares of her family, the rumour of war had ſcarce reached her ear. In a few days he was to depart, and with him all ſhe looked to as the ſource of her happineſs. In all the eloquence of native beauty and of ſorrow, ſhe beſought him to reflect on the change he was about to make, and the probable conſequence of the life he was engaging in. She held up her child to his eyes, and while her own ſtreamed with tears, ſhe diſplayed to his imagination what muſt be his regret when he, perhaps for the laſt time,

ſaw

ſaw the tops of his native mountains, and when in his dying moments he had no one to adminiſter relief to him, and reflected that probably his wife and his child were pining for that ſuſtenance which his ſkill and induſtry alone had heretofore made ſecure to them. To all her moving energy Arnold, whoſe heart was yet alive to every ſocial and relative affection, could anſwer only:—"I have "pledged my word;"—and inſtantly, with hurried ſtep and frantic geſtures, he left her preſence.

Bertolda, to all the ſoftneſs of her ſex, and all the keen ſenſibility that the female heart ever felt, added the genuine fortitude of a great mind. Her courage was of that ſpecies which has no diſtinction of ſex; ſhe could not bear the ſight of pain or cruelty; ſhe would weep at the relation even of a ſtranger's woe, but where truth or honour was concerned, there ſhe was a hero. The ſelf-

love that could prompt her to prefer her own eaſe, or even her life, to the reputation of another, ſhe diſdained; and ſhe contemned as puſillanimous thoſe who ſhrunk from perſonal evil, when it could procure good to others. When, therefore, Arnold had uttered the irrevocable ſentence, *I have pledged my word*, ſhe not only ceaſed from perſuaſion or importunity, but having for ſome few hours indulged the weakneſs of grief, ſhe encouraged what ſhe ſaw was irremediable, and facilitated his departure.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

TILL Arnold quitted Switzerland, home and its dear poſſeſſions occupied his thoughts, to the excluſion of all his brilliant hopes. He ſaw no object but his Bertolda in her grief: he heard no voice but that of his Almeric diſtreſſed and terrified at his mother's tears. A march of a few days opened his eyes to brighter proſpects. As the diſtance increaſed, the objects he had left diminiſhed, and the encouragement of the French officers, and the example of his companions, ſoon raiſed him to his uſual pitch of ardour for warlike occupations.

Where there was ſo much alacrity, little diſcipline was neceſſary to make a ſoldier. Arnold was ſoon perfect in his manœuvres, and ſhewed himſelf ſo uſeful in training his countrymen, that, in a ſhort time, he had a ſubordinate command entruſted to him.

The firſt action he was engaged in was the battle of Dreux, made memorable by the capture of the Conſtable de Montmorenci on the Catholic ſide, and the Prince de Condé on that of the Hugonots. Arnold Zulig was one of the firſt Switzers who lowered their pikes to keep off the horſe that were ſurrounding them; and who, when their weapons were all broken, had recourſe to ſtones to repulſe the attack of the German infantry. His firmneſs and example animated all around him, and when the Duke de Guiſe, after the Conſtable was made priſoner, came out of his ambuſh, where the enemy had paſſed him with-

out diſcovering him, he found the Swiſs troops as obſtinate in their defence as if they had been certain of victory: he admired their intrepidity, and took due care to ſupport them.

The battle, though it ſcarcely could be called a victory on either ſide, was in its iſſue of great ſervice to the Catholic cauſe, and, notwithſtanding the important capture of the Conſtable, diſpirited the inſurgents to a degree almoſt of deſperation. The Duke de Guiſe, after it was over, ordered Arnold to attend him in his tent, where the gallant Switzer received that which is to a ſoldier a recompenſe for every toil and danger: he had the thanks of the General, and the applauſe of all who had been witneſſes of his bravery. Even the Prince de Condé, who, rather as a gueſt than a captive, remained in the Duke's tent, added his commendations. The General undertook to report favourably of

him to the Queen, and appointed him to wait on the perſon of his Royal priſoner, whilſt they continued encamped.

Nothing was now wanting to Arnold's felicity, but means of conveying news of it to his Bertolda. His little troop had eſcaped with ſmall wounds, and he himſelf was unhurt. In this inſtant he felt the reward of the conflict he had endured on quitting his dwelling: he blamed himſelf for ever having heſitated, and was convinced that could Bertolda witneſs his glory, ſhe would confeſs the impulſe he had obeyed, a happy prediction.

The foul aſſaſſination of the Duke de Guiſe followed ſoon after the battle of Dreux, and the ſcars of wars were veiled by the thin covering of a peace, to which all ſides were induced to aſſent rather through faintneſs than inclination. Arnold's thoughts, being detached from military

military operations, flew homewards, and, after an abſence of near two years, he obtained leave to viſit Switzerland.

With all expedition he provided what was neceſſary for his journey, and ſet out, intending to travel as far as the roads permitted him on horſeback, and then converting his beaſt into that commodity which is current every where in Europe, to find the beſt means of regaining his habitation. He journeyed alone, for he well conceived that none but a huſband and a parent would conform to a huſband and a parent's haſte. But his impatience was not always judicious: it tempted him ſometimes to diſregard the relation between time and place, and thus, in one inſtance untowardly brought him, juſt as the twilight was thickening into darkneſs, to the center of a foreſt on the confines of the duchy of Burgundy.

To be benighted would have been a trifling impediment, could he have truſted to his horſe's knowledge of the road. This he ſoon found was not to be confided in: the new ſound his feet returned induced a ſuſpicion in his rider that he had quitted the beaten track, he pauſed, and looked round; but it was too dark to diſtinguiſh objects. The impoſſibility of tracing even the path he had purſued, convinced him that his alternative was going onward at hazard, or halting for the night. — To the latter his eagerneſs oppoſed itſelf: he ſpurred his horſe and went on, gaining courage by his ſafety; when he perceived the ſagacious animal ſlacken his pace, and in a few ſeconds, by the daſhing of water all around him, he was warned that he was entering an element which muſt be fatal to him if he proceeded.

Raſhneſs itſelf would now have checked its career: he turned back a few paces, diſ-

diſmounted, tied his horſe to the firſt tree he met with, and lay down himſelf at the foot of another, waiting for the deſirable approach of day.

His recent mortification, and conſequent detention, for ſome time diſturbed him, and kept him waking; but at length, fatigue overcame the anxiety of his mind, and he ſlumbered. After a repoſe of ſome hours, he was recalled to a ſenſe of his ſituation, by feeling himſelf violently ſhaken by the ſhoulder: his firſt ſuppoſition when he awoke was, that ſome ravenous inhabitant of the foreſt had prowled towards and diſcovered him. "My doom," ſaid he to himſelf," is now decreed: from this place I ſhall never remove; but whatſoever the animal that has attacked me, he ſhall not have his repaſt without earning it: weak as I may prove, I will not reſign my life without fighting for it."

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

ARNOLD's fears for his perſonal ſafety were ſoon after diſpelled by a man's voice, which in the language of the country he was travelling through, enquired why he was there, and who he was, and atoned for the interruption of his repoſe by inviting him to a dwelling near at hand.

He raiſed himſelf from his prone poſture inſtantly, and with the perception that it was day-light, his lulled eagerneſs to continue his journey re-entered his mind; he looked for his horſe, and at the ſame time, with many thanks, declined the ſtranger's reiterated invitation: his horſe was out of ſight, and he now found that,

that, in order to recover him, he muſt of neceſſity increaſe his acquaintance with the man who had addreſſed him, and whom he attentively ſurveyed. The light was ſufficient to ſhew him to be under the middle age of life, of a pleaſing aſpect and deportment, but habited coarſely, and in the garb of a recluſe.

Arnold learnt from him that the rivulet before them, having been ſwoln by late rains, was, and would be for many hours, impaſſable; that he had been informed of the preſence of a living creature, a ſhort time before, by hearing the trotting of his horſe, who had broken his bridle; and that he was led to ſuppoſe ſomething human near by finding him ſtanding at his door ſaddled. He had ſecured the beaſt, and then immediately came to ſeek its owner, fearing that ſome incautious traveller might have attempted to croſs the brook, and there loſt his life.

The

The inhabitant of the foreſt ſoon prevailed on Arnold to exchange his place of reſt for his dwelling, which was about three furlongs diſtant and whither he conducted him. The Switzer was aſtoniſhed to find in this inhoſpitable part of the country, the benevolence and manners of a metropolis. He was curious to know who his hoſt was; but natural good-breeding kept him ſilent.

They ſoon reached the place where the Solitary ſaid he lived, yet Arnold could ſee no appearance of a houſe. At length, going round to the oppoſite ſide of a ſmall hill, a door preſented itſelf, which his hoſt opened with a latch, and which was the entrance to his abode. Nature had formed the exterior, and it bore the rugged marks of her chizel: turf was its roof; turf were its ſides: the front had been accommodated to the purpoſes of light and entrance, A large crucifix on the wall of the firſt apartment

ment declared it conſecrated to religious uſes. On the right hand was a ſleeping chamber; on the left a ſitting-room, furniſhed with books. Every thing beſpoke the tenant to have been accuſtomed to civilized life, and to be of a mind that deſpiſed its luxurious ſuperfluities.

The Solitary, having firſt relieved the anxiety of his gueſt by ſhewing him his horſe made ſecure, buſied himſelf in ſatisfying his hunger, and, to Arnold's aſtoniſhment, ſet before him abundance of food, ſuch as implied the aids of ſociety; he ventured to obſerve on this indication of his being very near ſome town or village, and was anſwered that he was within two ſhort miles of the Chateau D'Aubrun, from which, ſaid the Solitary, all my wants are daily ſupplied.

Arnold Zulig's impatience to regain his

his native home was ſomewhat abated by the ſtimulus given to his curioſity. The novelty of this ſolitude, which included all things neceſſary to the comfort and convenience of life, without giving any inlet to its artificial enjoyments, ſtruck even the mind of the ſimple Switzer, who was prone to contemplation, and awake to obſerve the various diſtributions of Providence. He had been ſuddenly ſnatched from a ſpot which he had reaſon to believe afforded not the means of exiſtence to any but the brute creation, to one where every need of ſuch a man as himſelf ſeemed to meet its ſatisfaction. Indeed life has not a real neceſſity, nor can a moderate mind diſpoſed to ſolitude breathe a wiſh, which was not here provided for: the ſituation was romantic and beautiful; the circumjacent proſpect extenſive and bold: the rivulet ran within a few paces of the cell; the abundant foliage in ſummer was a protection from the heat; in winter the hills formed a bar-

barrier againſt the inclemency of the winds; the birds were ſinging melodiouſly; the fiſh leaped from their watry bed as if proud of their ſecurity; and all was peace and ſtilneſs.

Contraſted with the ſcene of bloodſhed and ſlaughter which Arnold had recently been engaged in, and which notwithſtanding his thirſt for glory, had ſeverely wounded his natural feelings, this was the manſion of the bleſt; and having attentively ſurveyed all things round him, he pronounced the poſſeſſor a happy man. His hoſt's notice was attracted by Arnold's obſervation: he had learnt from him the external circumſtances of his fortune, and now wiſhed for farther acquaintance with a mind that ſeemed to have been formed to excellence by the hand of Nature alone.

The tenant of the foreſt having purpoſely turned his converſation to the buſineſs

ſineſs of Arnold's journey, liſtened to him in ſilent attention while he expreſſed his ſenſations at the near proſpect of returning home and ſeeing his family, in terms that evinced the ſtrong feelings and laudable propenſities of his mind: the countenance of the Recluſe became overſpread with languid melancholy, and in great emotion, he exclaimed, "O happy man! who haſt ſo uſed the bleſſings of this life as not to forfeit the enjoyment of them, and ſo lived as not to make mankind thine enemy. Behold me, by my own folly hurled from the pinnacle of this world's beſt poſſeſſions, torn from the tendereſt objects of man's love, and by an intemperate, miſguided, and accurſed zeal in the proſecution of what I madly thought my duty, conſigned in this world to ſhame and oblivion, and in the next to eternal perdition!"

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

ZULIG was thunderſtruck at hearing theſe words. The man whom, but an inſtant before, he had judged to be in the poſſeſſion of all worldly comfort, ſecure from all worldly dangers, and in the practice of every human virtue, now ſtood before him, on his own confeſſion, a wretch and a culprit! He ſtarted with horror at the information, and was ready to queſtion the veracity or ſanity of his informer. The Solitary perceived his aſtoniſhment, and removed his doubts by the following narration:

"You ſee before you," ſaid he, "no eſs a perſon than Baron D'Aubrun, whom

whom birth and fortune, the favour of his prince, and the bleſſings of his dependents, once made conſpicuous and happy. At the age of thirteen I loſt my parents, and was, by my father's will, conſigned to the guardianſhip of his moſt intimate friend, Count de Lubenne. In him I found all want of parental love and care amply ſupplied: his endeavours were directed to rendering me the object of eſteem and admiration, and for this purpoſe, learning and the accompliſhments of a nobleman were equally beſtowed on me by thoſe beſt able to communicate them, while from my worthy guardian's admonitions and example I imbibed a love of virtue, a deteſtation of vice, and a deſire to ſtand foremoſt in whatever was laudable and honourable.

" At the time when I came under the care of Count de Lubenne, he was recently a widower. He had one child, a daughter, then in her ſixth year, and, I may

may truly ſay, that between this infant and myſelf his affection was equally divided. He lived to ſee me what his labours had been exerted to make me, in the poſſeſſion of a large family inheritance, the favour of the court, and the approbation and reſpect of the world.

'I had entered my twenty-third year when he was ſeiſed with a malady that in a ſhort time put an end to his valuable exiſtence. In the firſt ſtage of it, he was aware of his danger, and his converſations with me on the ſubject of my own intereſts, and thoſe of his daughter, became more and more frequent. In one of them he mentioned to me his deſign of bequeathing her to my care, as my father had done me to his; he ſaid he knew me well enough to be aſſured that her perſon and fortune would be ſafe under my protection, and was ſatisfied I would ſee her properly diſpoſed of. Immediately perceiving the greatneſs of

the charge, where beauty, nobility and wealth were to be guarded, I, in the moſt reſpectful terms I could deviſe, begged leave to decline it, fully ſtating my reaſons for thwarting my generous friend in his deſign. He appeared perfectly ſatisfied, and commended my refuſal; but to my inexpreſſible aſtoniſhment, when on his death bed, graſping my hand earneſtly he ſaid, " D'Aubrun I have diſobeyed your injunction: my daughter will be, muſt be, ſhall be your ward: diſcharge towards her the duty I undertook at *your* father's requeſt: her aunt will take the care of her perſon; but her eſtates and intereſt are ſubject to you alone: ſhe has been taught to reſpect you; and her gentle diſpoſition can give you no trouble: your noble refuſal convinced me you were worthy of the truſt."

'The agonies of death prevented the Count's ſaying more, or my anſwering him: his exiſtence cloſed with the day,

and on opening his will, I found the whole conduct of an immenſe revenue, till his daughter ſhould marry, or, after the age of twenty-five declare ſhe would not, devolved on me. My co-adjutrix ſeemed perfectly contented with having no charge but of the Counteſs's perſon, and I had reaſon to hope I ſhould acquit myſelf without much difficulty to the ſatisfaction of all concerned in the Count's will.

'My acquaintance with Mademoiſelle de Lubenne had been for ſome years interrupted by her father's placing her in a convent for the completion of her education, and I ſaw her not till after his deceaſe. She then returned to her chateau, and in all the lovelineſs of beauty and the moſt intereſting ſorrow, was introduced to me as to her vice parent. The extreme ſenſibility of her countenance and deportment, the filial piety every word and action demonſtrated,

made me at once admire, love, and revere her. Hitherto my affections had not found an object; but now I was all at once captivated by ſuch charms and ſuch evidences of ſuperior virtue as it was glory to yield to.

'Intoxicated as I was with this novel paſſion, my reaſon ſtill had the aſcendency, and my firſt leiſure moments after I had felt the conſequence of ſeeing and converſing with my young charge, repreſented moſt forcibly to me the extreme iniquity of my appropriating to myſelf that which was bequeathed to me as a ſacred truſt by my beſt friend in his dying moments. Sometimes, indeed, I endeavoured to perſuade myſelf that, by aſking the Counteſs's hand, I could not offer her an injury, and that, well as I ſtood with the prime perſonages of the kingdom, the world could not cenſure me for preſumption; but cooler reflection always talked a different language,

and

and told me my rank and fortune, diſtinguiſhed as they were, were yet far inferior to the Counteſs de Lubenne's; that her attractions could not fail of raiſing her ſtill higher, and that there was nothing under royalty itſelf which ſhe might not reaſonably aſpire to.

'A ſenſe of right operated ſo ſtrongly on me as to quell, in a great meaſure, this infant paſſion. It was ſtill painful, it was ſtill ardent; but I vowed it never ſhould betray me to the forfeiture of my character as a man of the ſtricteſt honour.

'Two years paſſed heavily on while I ſtruggled with this mortal enemy of my peace. To avoid the pangs I endured at every interview, and ſcarcely daring to truſt my own reſolution, I ſaw the Counteſs no oftener than was abſolutely neceſſary, and whatever could be done through the medium of her female

relation I transferred to her. The applications made to me by ſuch of the nobility as wiſhed for the alliance of ſo great an heireſs, were numerous, and not ſeldom highly advantageous, I faithfully reported all to her, and recommended thoſe I approved; but my ward poſitively rejected every overture, and ſeemed unaccountably and irreconcileably averſe to marriage.

'At the end of theſe two years of my wretchedneſs the Counteſs's female guardian died, and her grief and ſolitude drew me to ſee her frequently: I thought the ſorrow ſhe had expreſſed on the death of her father far ſurpaſſed by that on the loſs of her aunt, and I perceived with the moſt agoniſing concern, that inſtead of recovering from it after a due time, her melancholy increaſed on her, and her health was apace declining. Every day removed her farther down the precipice of ſickneſs, and the gulph below

low ſeemed to my eyes yawning to receive its deſtined prey.

'Aware of her ſituation, and not chuſing to relieve her melancholy ſolitude by the company of common friends, ſhe begged me to remain near her. I therefore ſcarcely left the houſe, and with all the *viſible* intereſt of a brother and the concealed tortures of a ſtill nearer relation, I ſat hour after hour with her, and ſaw her, with a rapidity too ſhocking to be thought of, haſtening to her early grave, dying, as I ſimly believed, with grief for the loſs of her aunt.

'The beſt advice that could be had I procured for her, and left nothing untried that could poſſibly reſtore her; but all to no purpoſe, medicine ſeemed but to accelerate her decay. She ſtill, though too weak to ſupport herſelf, roſe every day, was dreſt, and then always ſent for me. One of her phyſicians hap-

pening to be with her, when I came to her in conſequence of a meſſage, he obſerved a ſenſible variation in her pulſe, and a contrary change when, being obliged to leave her for the remainder of the day, I bid her farewell. On diſcovering this, which he conſidered as a clue to her diſorder, he followed me, and having deſired to ſpeak with me in private, gave it me as his opinion, that the Counteſs's death or recovery depended under Heaven on me. As ſoon as I had overcome the ſurpriſe this welcome intelligence cauſed in me, I deviſed means not ſo much for drawing from my ward any favourable confeſſion, as for informing her of the genuine paſſion I had been ſtruggling with.

'To this intent I requeſted of her permiſſion to viſit her *alone*, which as yet during her illneſs I had never done. She acquieſced in my deſire to ſee her; but excuſed herſelf from diſmiſſing her favourite

favourite attendant, from whom, ſhe ſaid, ſhe wiſhed nothing concealed. I went to her, and found her ſo nearly exhauſted that I almoſt doubted the prudence of mentioning a ſubject that might, by the agitation it cauſed, bring on the dire event I was labouring to avert. She ſaw my diſtreſs, and tenderly enquiring what diſturbed me, ſhe obliged me by her languid earneſtneſs to aſſign ſome reaſon for my too viſible perturbation. Scarcely able to articulate a word under the oppreſſion of fear, deſpair, and anxiety, and all the innumerable conflicting paſſions of my ſoul, I briefly begged her to hear me for one half hour unwitneſſed. As if to avoid importunity, ſhe complied; and I inſtantly, fearing that a moment's delay might daſh out every ſpark of hope, unfolded to her all that had paſſed in my mind ſince her father's death, and conjured her, now that ſhe was, in her own opinion, quitting the world, at leaſt to

give me the ſatisfaction of hearing whether if I had ſooner avowed myſelf ſhe would have rejected or accepted me.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

'NOT to weary you with trifling particulars,' continued the Baron, 'I haſten to tell you that my declaration met with whatever could cheer my anxiety, or give hopes of the Counteſs's life. In a few months her health was re-eſtabliſhed, and, with the unanimous approbation of all our friends, I became the enraptured huſband of my parental friend's daughter. I was now at that pinnacle of happineſs which cannot be quitted without deſcending, and thence my own folly precipitated me before the expiration of three years.

'Flattered by the diſtinction with

which the Prince de Condé had thought proper newly to honour me, I ſuffered myſelf to be implicitly led by him into Hugonot principles and party, and not conſidering that my reverence for the Deity would have been much better evinced by my loyalty to him he had ſet over me, I became a zealous ſchiſmatic and an active rebel. I engaged deeply with the Bourbon and Coligny families, was intent on all their preachers delivered, and buſy in every plot ſubverſive of the government. Whatever befel our party was a ſtimulus to my perſeverance: if we were, in the leaſt undertaking, ſucceſsful, I was encouraged to a pitch of intoxication: if we were defeated, I was madly deſperate. My days were ſpent in the tumults of civil war; my nights were given up to perſuading others to engage in our plots and outrages.

'It had been hinted to me by the Prince,

Prince, that all our endeavours to ſpread our opinions and increaſe our followers were much impeded by the counter-working of my wife, who had remained ſtedfaſt in the religion of her forefathers, and exhorted continually thoſe about her to imitate her example. She had expreſſed her ſorrow at my deſertion of the national church in ſuch terms, and my love and reſpect for her were ſo great, that hitherto I had been awed into ſilence on the ſubject, when with her; but now being piqued by the raillery of ſome who, perhaps, only to draw me to their purpoſe, pretended to think me abſolutely governed by the Counteſs de Lubenne, and being moved by the ſerious remonſtrance of our leaders, who repreſented it as a culpable ſymptom of lukewarmneſs, that I ſuffered any one of my houſehold to remain a votary of ſuperſtition and idolatry, I determined to uſe whatever authority I had to compel my wife to do as I had done.

'Thus

'Thus worked on myſelf, I tried all that perſuaſion and reaſoning could do towards making her a convert; but ſoon finding it ineffectual, I deſiſted, and attempted to diſſuade thoſe who had ſpirited me to the undertaking from urging me farther. The whole of their united force and art were now levelled at me, and with ſuch fury did their re-iterated diſcourſes and exhortations inflame me, that one night, after having ſpent many hours in converſation with the heads of the faction, and, probably, being ſomewhat elated with wine, I returned to my wife, who had followed me as far as a miſerable village, near which our army lay encamped, and entering the chamber where ſhe was ſitting expecting me, with her infant daughter aſleep on her lap, I drew my ſword, and ſwore the little wretch ſhould not live to imbibe with her maternal nutriment the abominable ſuperſtitions of her deluded mother.

'The

'The arm of one parent was extended to defend, while that of the other was lifted to deſtroy its offspring. Incenſed at her oppoſition, I ſhudder when I ſay I made a lunge at this dear partner of my heart; and had not Providence averted the blow, this hand had at that inſtant completed its maſter's villany. But why do I rejoice at my diſappointment? The cruelty of aſſaſſination could ſcarcely have added a deeper ſhade to the ſin I had been guilty of—had my ſword reached her heart, it had immediately ended her miſeries—that it did not, cannot acquit me of murder.

'The weapon dropped from my hand at the moment when it failed of its diabolical purpoſe, and, ſtupid with horror, I ſunk on the floor. My benevolent, my noble, my angelic Creſcence, forgot her own recent danger when ſhe ſaw me fall, and, quitting her child, ſhe bowed over me to learn what had ſo kindled my paſ-

ſions

ſions and tranſported me? — Without an intention of repeating my blow, but unjuſtly exaſperated againſt my wife as the cauſe of the commotion that was tearing my vitals, I drove her from me with fury: I roſe, and ſcarcely knowing whither to direct my ſteps, returned to ſeek the companions I had quitted.

'The Prince was retired to his quarters, and the reſt of the party had diſperſed; I therefore had no place to attract me: — a moment of cool deliberation intervened, and preſented to my appalled conſcience the inexpiable crime I had been guilty of, and the ſtill greater that I had been on the brink of perpetrating. Shame reſtrained me, or I had inſtantly followed the Prince, and, by a total renunciation of all my newly-adopted principles, broke with him and his party.

'I wandered about all night, in a ſtate of

of mind fit only for the nether regions, till the riſing Sun ſomewhat diſpelled the hideous gloomineſs of my thoughts; and, in pious contrition, I ſolemnly pronounced to Heaven an abjuration of thoſe abominable tenets which, by aſſerting the lawfulneſs of any action where the promotion of a religious cauſe was the end ſought, were leading me blindfold to deſtruction. This done, I haſtily returned homeward, hoping to make my peace with my injured wife.

'My ſenſe of duty had, alas! revived too late. On enquiring for the Counteſs, an old faithful male ſervant, who had attended her from her infancy, informed me, with torrents of tears ſtreaming down his furrowed cheeks, that, terrified by my violence, and imagining that thoſe who had the direction of my conſcience would not reſt without her blood and that of her child, ſhe had quitted the place. The man added, that he

he had begged permiſſion to accompany her; but ſhe had anſwered him, that his years and infirmities would not admit of his uſing ſo much expedition as was neceſſary for her ſafety.

'I could get no farther intelligence from any one, and therefore inſtantly ſet off for Chateau d'Aubrun, whither I ſuppoſed ſhe had retreated. To my exceſſive conſternation I learnt, on my arrival, that ſhe had been there a few hours before me, and, after remaining a ſhort time alone in her cabinet, had quitted the houſe on foot with her child, attended only by one woman ſervant.

'Not a road now remained unexplored. I ſent ſcouts every way, and myſelf ſcoured the country with a faint hope that I might overtake this dear exile on ſome of the roads that led to her own eſtates. All was to no purpoſe, and three days paſſed without my hearing

ing the leaſt tidings of her: then, as if Fortune meant to laugh at and deceive me, the woman who had accompanied her, returned almoſt dead with fatigue. Threats, promiſes, and bribes, prevailed on her to reveal what ſhe knew of her lady's intention. She ſaid the Counteſs had ſet out with a deſign to go only to the houſe of a diſtant relation in the next province; but that ſhe had been forced to change her plan by finding the country that way full of Hugonots, who, by means of their preachers, were ſtirring up the lower claſſes to commit all ſorts of violence on the Catholics. Whither ſhe purpoſed going afterward, her attendant denied knowing; but ſhe could point out the road on which ſhe had left her, and I immediately ſet out, encouraged to a freſh and more vigorous purſuit.

'After travelling many hours, I was driven almoſt to deſpair by ſeeing a

ſmall

ſmall river before me, the rapidity of whoſe current and its apparent depth ſeemed to defy me to ford it. I turned to the right, hoping to find a more convenient paſſage. Judge then, you who are a huſband and a father, what was my diſtraction when I ſaw lying on the bank, ſome female garments, which I knew to be thoſe my wife was dreſſed in, when in my madneſs I attempted the life I would now have given an univerſe to preſerve.

'The ſuppoſition that ruſhed on my mind was, that overcome by fatigue and deſpair, and abandoned by her attendant, ſhe had choſen rather to commit herſelf and her infant to a watery grave, than to remain in a world where I might find her. This ſuppoſition, diſtracting as it was, the experience of near three years has ſtrengthened. I returned almoſt inſenſible to the caſtle, where a delirium ſeiſed me, and waſted me to a ſhadow of what

what I was. On my recovery from it, I forſook the world, and devoted myſelf to this ſequeſtered life, in which I purpoſe to remain till death ſhall ſummon me to my deſerved fate in the other world, where I muſt face the dear object of my ſanguinary cruelty, and can only hope, by ſelf-condemnation, to avoid the agony of hearing her and the angel-ſpirit of her child accuſe me of their murder.

'My caſtle is, as I have told you, not far from this place. There I have a faithful ſteward who, while I live, will take care of my revenues. My relations and friends, finding my reſolution unalterable, have deſiſted from their importunities, and now ſuffer me to live in the ſolitude I deſire. I receive all I want from the caſtle, and thus ſupport life without caring for exiſtence.'

Here the Baron cloſed his mournful tale, and Arnold's tears were mixed with

with his. The deteſtation of his crime was abated by his contrition for it, and the pity of his gueſt overcame his indignation.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

IN the afternoon of this day the waters of the river were ſufficiently ſubſided, and, after due acknowledgements to his hoſt, the warm-hearted Switzer reſumed his journey, and reached his native land of vegetative froſt without farther diſaſter.

The ſtory of the Baron found employment for his thoughts till his eyes could aſcertain the ſpot he was moſt impatient to ſee. As he approached his own humble manſion, the emotions of his heart were almoſt too powerful for the continuance of his ſpeed: he ſilently thanked Heaven that his lowly ſtate exempted him

him from the misfortunes of him, whoſe ſorrows ſtill echoed in his ears, and congratulated himſelf that he had a wife and child, to whom he returned with ſentiments only of love, and who had nothing to fear from his paſſions or his prejudices.

He was too much a lover to bear the delay of announcing his arrival by any other tongue than his own. It was evening when he arrived, and opening the wicket of his little garden he haſtened to that part of the houſe where he expected to find Bertolda. She was there; but her huſband's joy was ſomewhat damped by perceiving ſurpriſe and fright, the predominant expreſſions of her countenance. She ſtrugged to looſe herſelf from his embraces, and, in evident uneaſineſs, left the room. Zulig's attention inſtantly fixed itſelf on his Almeric, who, in perfect inſenſibility to the joy of one whom he looked on as a ſtranger,

ſtranger, was purſuing his infantine delights on the floor. 'Tis ſtrange,' ſaid Arnold to himſelf. — 'My wife ſeems diſturbed at my coming: ſhe has left me abruptly—perhaps I did wrong to come by ſurpriſe—the ſhock has overſet her—ſhe is ill with it—I muſt haſten to find her—God grant it be not of ſerious conſequence—and, O Arnold, pray to Heaven that thou mayeſt indeed find her the loving wife ſhe was.—Be gone, unjuſt, cruel ſuſpicion—my Bertolda's love the world could not ſhake, nor ages wear out—Where are you, O my Bertolda?'

She entered as he ſpoke—ſhe ran towards him—ſhe flew to his boſom, and her joy appeared in all its brightneſs; but in ſpite of its repelling endeavours, Arnold had received the impreſſion, and was convinced that his ſudden coming was very unpleaſant to his wife.

The evening, notwithſtanding, paſſed in chearfulneſs. Young Almeric ſoon grew familiar with his father, and the neighbours flew at the report of Arnold's arrival to congratulate him on his ſafety, and to indulge their curioſity by enquiry. Still Bertolda ſeemed ill at eaſe: ſhe frequently withdrew from the feſtive circle, and there was evidently more on her mind than affiduity to make her huſband welcome.

A night's repoſe wore nearly out the impreſſion his unſuſpicious mind had admitted, and happy Zulig roſe early, impatient to viſit his beloved haunts, to ſee the ſituation of his little wealth, and to converſe with his former intimates. His venerable uncle, John Zulig, who had viſited him the preceding evening, was the firſt perſon he met: his advice had frequently been of uſe to Arnold, and he had experienced from his kindneſs all the care of a father: he felt a reve-

reverential affection for his age and well-known integrity, and now embraced him with delight. After a few minutes' converſation, Arnold ſpoke of Bertolda, and the old man's countenance diſcovered embarraſſment and uneaſineſs. Arnold's blood chilled in his veins: he wiſhed and he feared to enquire what his uncle's looks indicated: he recollected what he had obſerved the preceding evening, and though the cauſe was a myſtery to him, he was palpably convinced that he had not returned to the happineſs he had quitted when he followed the lilies of France.

'You found your wife in good health,' ſaid the elder Zulig, as if deſirous of telling whatever Arnold dreaded to learn—'and your boy too has thriven finely.'—'Yes,' replied Arnold coldly and doubtfully.—'Now tell me frankly,' ſaid the man of experience, 'how did Bertolda receive you on your firſt entrance? was

it with joy or indifference?'—To theſe ſtabbing queſtions Arnold replied by relating all that had diſtreſſed his mind.—'I will tell you the cauſe of your wife's giving you a no more cordial welcome,' ſaid his uncle:—'it is about eighteen months ſince, one morning, accidentally paſſing your houſe, I ſaw a young man, a ſtranger to me, and of an appearance that implied a ſtation far above ours, enter it: he had been ſeen by ſome of the neighbours the evening before, and I ſoon learnt that much curioſity was excited to know who he was. Hearing this, I went immediately to your wife, and queſtioned her reſpecting this ſtranger, as far as my relation to and regard for you authoriſed me. She gave me no ſatisfactory account of him, and ſeemed diſconcerted at my having ſeen him. In a few days the appearance of this viſitor was changed: I am confident, and ſo is every one that ſaw him when he firſt came, that it was the ſame perſon; but

now he was dreſt as a woman, was inſeparable from Bertolda, and frequently ſeen with a little child. Still the account your wife gave me was inconcluſive and myſterious: ſhe gave out that her gueſt was a lady under great diſtreſs, and avowed the greateſt attachment to her; but as not a word of her ſex had been ſaid when the firſt enquiries were made it, is the opinion of all concerned for you, that advantage was taken of your abſence in the baſeſt manner to introduce the murderer of your peace.'

CHAP. VII.

So far had Arnold liſtened to his uncle's narration, when the conflict of his tortured mind ſubdued his corporal ſtrength, and he fell motionleſs at the feet of his informer. The old man could with difficulty raiſe him, or adminiſter relief to him: he obtained help, and Arnold was conveyed back to his houſe ſtill inſenſible.

On opening his eyes, the firſt object that met them was Bertolda buſied about him. The venom of jealouſy had circulated through his veins, and inflamed with rage at the ſight of her, and making an effort to puſh her from him, he relapſed

relapſed into his ſwoon. Again recovering, he again teſtified his diſguſt, and forbade her to appear before him. He ſent for his Almeric, and, in all the bitterneſs of woe, mourned over him his mother's infidelity, and his own wretched helpleſs condition.

After a day and night ſpent in tumultuous diſturbance, and in uſeleſs recollection of his departed happineſs, he ſought his uncle, who had left him to repoſe, and adviſed with him on the part it became him to act. The old man ſhrunk not from the duty of a friend: he recommended it to Arnold to tax Bertolda with the breach of her matrimonial faith, that ſhe might not have time to frame a falſe exculpation, and accompanied him home to ſupport the charge.

Arnold, as he entered his houſe, called Bertolda. She came. Her coun-

tenance was melancholy; but there was a hardineſs in it which ill becomes guilt. Arnold attempted to ſpeak; but the accuſation would not leave his lips. Bertolda, as if her ſpirit roſe with his diſpleaſure, firmly enquired why ſhe was called and why treated by her huſband in a way that pronounced him inſane, or her moſt undeſervedly an alien from his affections.—'What is it I have done?' ſaid ſhe.—'When was it that I erred?—Inform me of my offence, and if I cannot fully clear myſelf, I will at leaſt try, by the humbleſt ſubmiſſion, to appeaſe your wrath.'—This requiſition John Zulig anſwered by accuſing her, in the ſtrongeſt terms that anger and intereſt could dictate, of having harboured in the abſence of her huſband a perſon who, by the common voice of all around her, was judged to have ſupplanted him.

Bertolda heard the old man iterate his charge,

charge, and ſtill preſerved an undaunted countenance. A ſmile of contempt towards her accuſer, and of pity for the deluſion of her huſband, ſat on her features, and raiſing her hands and eyes ſhe replied:—'May Heaven now ſupport the innocence it has hitherto preſerved; and when I forfeit it, may its protection be withdrawn. I have a ſpirit in my boſom which would bow with all the meekneſs of an infant under deſerved reproof; but which unmerited ſeverity ſerves but to ſtiffen. Forgive me, therefore, if even to my huſband and his uncle I ſhew myſelf the bold aſſerter of my own innocence.—I am charged, good Heaven! with infidelity to my huſband:—I deny the charge, and ſay that he who dares aſſert it on his own knowledge, is far more criminal than he can ever prove me. If, indeed, to have counted the hours of my huſband's abſence;—if to have ſhuddered even at the mention of his danger and at the

name of France, and of war;—if to have prayed with all the fervor of a being on the brink of eternal wretchedneſs for his ſafe and ſpeedy return;—if to have ſhunned all pleaſure, becauſe, with him all its reliſh was departed, is to be unfaithful, I ſtand condemned; for all this have I done; but never, never did my love ſtray in thought or wiſh from the father of my Almeric, nor ſhall it, even if, inſpired by the malice which now works on his unſuſpicious nature, he refuſes conviction and determines to believe me the abandoned wretch I am thought.—Let the object of his jealouſy be ſent for: it is, I aſſure you, within reach; and let him then be ſatisfied, far better than by words, that the perſon I have received, careſſed, and admitted to my boſom and my bed, was, and is a helpleſs woman.—To her I have indeed pledged myſelf in the ſtricteſt bonds of amity, and not even my duty to my huſband ſhall render me forſworn by prevailing on me

me to reveal who this dear ſtranger is, or why ſhe ſheltered herſelf with me, whence ſhe came, or whither ſhe goes. She is now in the houſe of my neighbour, Joanna Wert; there I placed her till I could better accommodate her out of the reach of my huſband's enquiries. His ſudden coming terrified her, and diſconcerted me. Let her be ſent for: I am ſure ſhe will come, if ſhe is told the danger I am in.'

Arnold impatiently caught at theſe means of calming his doubts, and expelling the demon that harraſſed him. He went himſelf to the houſe of Joanna Wert, and enquiring for Bertolda's friend, the crabbed old woman, after ſurveying his countenance attentively, and aſking many queſtions as to the purpoſe of his enquiry, refuſed him any information. Not caring to publiſh his domeſtic uneaſineſs, he only urged his wife's deſire to ſee the perſon he was in

queſt of, and this had no effect on the crafty Joanna, who replying only that ſhe was very ſure Bertolda Zulig would never have ſent him to fetch one ſhe had induſtriouſly concealed from him, at the ſame inſtant raiſed his ſuſpicion into certainty, and rudely ſhoved him out of her houſe, which he had but juſt quitted, when a ſhe-neighbour of hers met him and enquired the cauſe of his apparent melancholy. He affected to diſguiſe it, and ſaid careleſsly, that he had been on a meſſage from his wife to Joanna Wert to find out a perſon that ſhe had been kind to.—"O," replied the goſſip, 'you have been ſeeking the *man-woman*, as all the people in this part call him.—I ſaw him or her yeſterday go away from Joanna's, dreſt in the cloaths he firſt appeared at your houſe in; and upon my word, as I turned back to look after him, I was puzzled to ſay whether he made the prettieſt figure when dreſt in Bertolda's jacket and ſtraw-hat, or when

when he wore his own cloaths, and looked, like, what I am ſure he is, a true gentleman."

The moſt malicious invective that ever was deviſed could not have wounded Arnold more deeply than the gigling tattle of this prate-apace. Scarcely conſcious of the path he took, he wandered about in ſilent ſorrow, and after a ramble of ſome hours, he found himſelf at his own door, where his uncle was ſtanding in great concern at his long abſence.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

JOANNA Wert was now conſidered by the elder Zulig as an accomplice with Bertolda: he was ſatisfied of her guilt and by every argument he could urge endeavoured to rouſe a ſpirit of indignation in his nephew, who, more like a criminal than the injured perſon, was ſtanding with folded hands and downcaſt eyes, too deeply intereſted in his wife's guilt to lift his arm or utter a word againſt her.

Bertolda had heard the ill ſucceſs of the application to Joanna without ſhrinking, and ſtill continued to maintain the fortitude of virtue, or the audacity of conſummate vice. She now deſired Joanna

anna might be ſent for. Joanna came. In the preſence of Arnold and his uncle ſhe told her neighbour what was the imputation thrown on her, and required her to exculpate her by declaring what ſhe knew of the ſtranger.

Joanna, in the fury of enraged friendſhip, ſet out with an invective on thoſe who dared to impeach the virtue of Bertolda, and then with the utmoſt poſitiveneſs, but without any additional proof, aſſerted that the perſon in queſtion was no other than a woman to whom ſhe knew Bertolda had been very kind. A few interrogatories put to her by the uncle, completely embarraſſed the vehement witneſs: ſhe could not tell who, what, or whence this queſtionable being was, why it came, nor whither it went. Her aſſertions tallied too exactly with thoſe of Bertolda to be admitted as evidence by John's ſagacity, and being diſmiſſed,

diſmiſſed, ſhe departed in a ſecond ſtorm of vociferation.

The elder Zulig now with increaſed earneſtneſs repeated his exhortations to Arnold to rid their family of one ſo unworthy of forming a part of it. All this was heard by the culprit with intrepidity and manifeſt contempt. She replied not to John, but to her huſband ſhe very tenderly, and yet undauntedly, appealed for mercy and ſuſpended judgment. She bid him recur to every circumſtance of their life and her conduct, and if he could charge her with once having ſlighted or deceived him, then, and not till then, to ſuſpect her. She reminded him that the name of her family was ever held in veneration for integrity and virtue; and ſhe conjured him by all that could move him, to diſmiſs his jealouſy and judge of her by what he had ever found her, and ſhould hereafter find her.

But

But jealouſy thus grounded could not prudently be diſmiſſed. As ſoon as the affair became, by Joanna's report, public, the general voice of the canton was againſt Bertolda; her own relations diſclaimed her; and Arnold was obliged, either by her inability to clear herſelf, or by her unſhaken conſtancy in preſerving her vow, after a few days of faint hope, to follow the advice of his friends, and reſolved to repudiate his wife on a well-grounded ſuſpicion of conjugal infidelity.

As the evidence, though ſtrong, came ſhort of legal proof, the law did not interpoſe between them. John Zulig found out a place at a conſiderable diſtance where ſhe might be maintained in cheap obſcurity. The perſons who were to have the care of her, were to be in effect her jailors: ſhe was allowed the range of the houſe and a field adjoining it, but beyond it ſhe was on no pre-

text

text to ſtir. Her ſtation was to be that of a ſervant in the family, and her reward nothing more than her maintenance.

To this place, after a cloſe impriſonment and ſolitude of many weeks in her huſband's houſe, John Zulig prepared to accompany her. When he came to ſummon her to an immediate departure, he found her as inflexible as ever. She inſiſted on once more ſeeing her huſband and her child: the ſtern uncle refuſed the requeſt.—'Great God ſupport me!' cried the unhappy woman, 'this is too great a trial for human ſtrength alone.—I ſcarce know what is my duty.—Stay, cruel uncle, let me for a moment deliberate on what I ought to do: to leave my huſband is ſhocking: I know his love, and I well know that I rob him of all comfort if I leave him:—my Almeric too!—what will become of him without a mother's care—who ſhall teach

teach his liſping tongue to bleſs and ſupplicate his Maker?—who will attend to his wants or underſtand his language, intelligible only to a mother's ear?—O incautious friendſhip!—O raſh vow of eternal ſecreſy!—May I not be allowed to ſay ſo much as will releaſe me from this imminent danger of loſing that which is dearer to me than life?—O Madame, to what has my pity for you reduced me."

John Zulig perceiving her begin to waver, and perhaps moved by her agoniſing conflict, encouraged her to diſcloſe the ſecret ſhe was charged with, by promiſing that none ſhould ever be entruſted with it excepting himſelf and her huſband.—"And can you," replied Bertolda reddening with indignation, "counſel me to treachery by offering to conceal it?—or do you imagine I would truſt even the moſt ſolemn oath of a man who thinks ſo lightly of the crime

of

of perjury as to adviſe it?—You have blinded Arnold's eyes, or he would ſee that my inflexibility is the greateſt poſſible proof of innocence:—had I had any thing criminal to conceal, 'twas eaſy to have formed a tale that might impoſe on his unſuſpecting mind, but ſuch arts I ſcorn. I called Heaven to witneſs my ſincerity when I promiſed inviolable ſecrecy to the dear unhappy creature for whoſe ſake I am now puniſhed, and till I have her leave to ſpeak, I will be ſilent.' She again inſiſted on ſeeing Arnold and Almeric before ſhe departed; but ſhe was ſteadily refuſed. Her indignation at this apparent cruelty in ſome meaſure counteracted the violence of her grief, and with repeated proteſtations of her innocence, and firm reliance on Heaven for her future vindication, ſhe quitted her huſband's dwelling and retired to the ſituation aſſigned her.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

THUS was the domeſtic peace of Arnold Zulig entirely broken. He now, inſtead of enjoying thoſe comforts he looked for at home, dragged on a life of miſery that ſeemed every day to increaſe: his ſpirit was broken, and nothing could rouſe him, till his diſeaſe found its own remedy: time blunted the ſharpneſs of his ſorrow, and his reſtleſs mind pointed towards a life of reſtleſſneſs as its proper element.—Accordingly in about a year he took the deſperate reſolution of ſelling his ſmall poſſeſſions, and quitting a country that was now become a deſert to him, to become a wanderer and a fugitive. He placed Almeric

meric under the care of John his uncle, deſigning to leave him there till his age admitted of his aſſiſting him in any ſcheme of life chance might mark out.

Having ſettled his affairs in this manner, France, whoſe commotions were not yet appeaſed, attracted his thoughts, and thither he bent his way, hoping in the tumult of war to drown the more audible whiſpers of memory. The ſad reverſe of fortune he had met with, created in him a longing to reviſit Baron D'Aubrun in his ſolitude, that he might pour into a boſom that he believed would ſympathiſe with him, the melancholy and grief that nearly overwhelmed him: he therefore made his way through the foreſt in which he had bewildered himſelf when returning home.

Another diſappointment here awaited him. He found the cell, indeed, but no one anſwered his repeated calls. After waiting

waiting ſome hours till the evening drew on, in hopes that the Baron, though abſent, might return, his curioſity to know the fate of his kind hoſt prompted him to ſeek the Chateau, d'Aubrun which he remembered the Baron had deſcribed as being within a ſmall diſtance from the hermitage.

He arrived there before it was dark, and was much ſurpriſed at perceiving that the building, which was large and ancient, wore a military appearance, and ſeemed the ſtation of a garriſon who expected a ſiege. The bridge was up; a ſentinel paraded before it; cannon were mounted thick on the battlements; horſes and carriages laden with proviſions were paſſing to and fro, and at a diſtance a number of ſoldiers were employed in throwing up out-works of earth.

Arnold, on addreſſing the ſentinel, was ordered

ordered to go forward to another. By him he was received as a ſpy, and was then conducted between two ſoldiers to the preſence of the commanding officer, who interrogated him ſharply. Nothing being found on him that indicated an hoſtile errand, he hoped he ſhould be ſuffered to depart; but it was not the intention of the governor to diſmiſs him thus eaſily. The garriſon held the place for the Hugonots, and Arnold to the firſt queſtions put to him had given anſwers that declared him attached to the oppoſite party. He was now offered pay if he would ſerve in the Bourbon intereſt; but he replied that it was not the cuſtom of his countrymen to engage againſt a rightful ſovereign, and that, though a private man, he ſcorned to give a ſanction to rebellion.

After uttering theſe words he was inſtantly ordered into confinement, and during five days was alternately threatened

ened and cajoled by thoſe whoſe office it was to bring him his ſmall pittance of meagre diet, or who were ſent purpoſely to work on his ſtubborn fidelity. Theſe perſons at length ſeemed convinced of his obduracy, and he was ſuffered to remain unmoleſted. He had enquired frequently what had been the fate of the Baron d'Aubrun; but if any thing concerning him was entruſted to thoſe he aſked, they kept it inviolably ſecret.

Arnold's ſituation was in a ground-room of the building, and from the noiſes in the adjacent apartments, he concluded that the priſoners were numerous. Theſe apartments ſeemed to have been haſtily converted into places of confinement; for the window of his priſon was not barred, but, almoſt to the total excluſion of light, fenced with boards, and the only defence of two doors, one of which he had never ſeen

opened, was a few ſlips of iron, no ſtronger than hoops, nailed acroſs.

Theſe circumſtances of apparent inſecurity might have tempted him to try at eſcaping, if aught in the world he was excluded from had been worth an endeavour to re-obtain it; but he had nothing to ſtimulate him, and therefore remained paſſive under his captivity, waſting the ſlowly-pacing hours in rumination on the calamities that had baniſhed his inherited peace from his boſom.—In this dejection he frequently uttered his complaints aloud, and would reaſon and hold converſation with himſelf, till the ſentinel at his door came in to be ſatisfied that he had no companion.

He had for ſome nights heard a noiſe that frequently broke his reſt and excited his curioſity. It was like the action of an edged inſtrument on wood; and

and one night in particular, it was ſo loud that he concluded its effect muſt be viſible in his chamber.—As ſoon therefore, as the little light admitted into his cell was ſtrong enough, he ſurveyed every part attentively, but found nothing. In the afternoon, by the darting of a ſun-beam in a particular direction, he perceived a ſmall aperture in the door that was never opened, and through it he fancied he ſaw an unſteady object, bright in its appearance, and twinkling in its motion. He roſe and went toward the door: there was a hole newly made; but what ſurpriſed him much was, that it appeared as if the wood was not perforated on the farther ſide, ſo that now he could not ſee through it. Imagining from this circumſtance, that a bit of white wood againſt which he looked, had reflected the unſteady light, he deſiſted from a more ſcrupulous inveſtigation.

The enſuing night the noiſe was louder and leſs interrupted than ever, and he could clearly diſtinguiſh the place whence it proceeded, to be the door in which he had ſeen the hole. He roſe at day-break, and though he could not diſcern the ſpot with his eye, he could feel that the aperture had been conſiderably enlarged. He waited impatiently for light, but it was many hours before his blinded window admitted ſufficient to aſcertain what he ſaw.—At noon the enlarged opening remained covered on the outer ſide, and he waited with fixed attention for that appearance which he was now convinced was not the effect of the light on the white wood. The ſun again ſhone bright, and he ſaw more perfectly the ſame luminous object, which he could plainly diſcover to be a human eye: he approached the door haſtily, and two ſmall fingers were thruſt through the ſpace.

His

His curioſity and his benevolence militated ſtrongly. He wiſhed, moſt ardently he wiſhed, to know what he was to underſtand by the attempt making, as it ſhould ſeem, for a communication between the two apartments, whether it was for his comfort, or that of one ſtill more diſtreſſed. He feared to ſpeak, leſt he ſhould add to the affliction of ſome fellow-priſoner by alarming the guard. Thus reſtrained, he could only make ſigns of pleaſure at the diſcovery, which he perceived were underſtood by the eye and the fingers. Theſe were at length withdrawn, and two pallid lips appeared and moved as in the act of ſpeaking; but as they were accompanied by no audible articulation, all was unintelligible. The palm of a hand was now held up, bliſtered and excoriated; and the diſtreſs was ultimately explained by a knife with a broken blade, which was ſhewn through the hole. Theſe ſignals were ſcarcely offered to his

conſideration when they were ſuddenly ſnatched away, and the aperture cloſed with the white wood.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

FROM all the preceding circumſtances, Arnold concluded that a priſoner in the next apartment was making a bold effort for liberty, and that the knife had been broken and the hand wounded in the deſperate attempt. The hue and form of the fingers led him to ſuppoſe this fellow-ſufferer a female; and he now wanted nothing to ſpirit him.

The wood which had ſuddenly covered the chaſm was in a few minutes again removed, and the eye and lips were alternately preſented. The ardour of Zulig was at this moment inflamed to

the height, and he would have ſpoken; but a finger was put to the lips whenever he attempted utterance, and thus enjoined him ſilence. With much earneſtneſs and the moſt expreſſive geſtures, he endeavoured to manifeſt his participation in the diſtreſs of his neighbour, and his readineſs to afford every aſſiſtance in his power.

In his examination when captured, he had been ſtripped of whatever could be a means of releaſe or deſtruction; conſequently he had nothing that could enlarge the aperture. In vain he had made ſigns of deſire to have the broken knife: they were not underſtood. At laſt his eagerneſs getting the better of his caution, he ventured to ſay in a louder whiſper, 'Give me the knife.' The hole was inſtantly covered with the white wood, and he heard the voice of ſome one as if alarmed by his.

The

The communication remained cloſed till evening, when he ſaw two fingers put through the hole and the knife between them. He had now increaſed his caution and he took the knife in ſilence.

As ſoon as the caſtle clock had ſtruck twelve, at which time he obſerved there was a profound ſtilneſs throughout that part of the building where he was, he began to work on the opening, and bad as was the inſtrument, his hands, accuſtomed to labour, ſoon increaſed the ſpace to double its former ſize. He had proceeded thus far in his work, when his progreſs was impeded by the perſon for whom he toiled, who having ſoftly pronounced one ſyllable of injunction, placed the piece of wood over the hole.

This obſtacle not being again removed for ſome hours, he ſet himſelf to looſen

the nails which held one of the ſlips of iron acroſs the door, and having ſucceeded ſo well as to have it in readineſs to take off without the ſlightneſs of its hold being obſervable, he tried the reſt and brought them without much difficulty to the ſame convenient ſtate.

But to his exceſſive conſternation he was, as ſoon as day appeared in his chamber, convinced that the effect of a part of his endeavours muſt be viſible. So much of the door had been cut away as left the white wood very obvious; and he could not doubt that when his guard came next to viſit him, his induſtry would be obſerved. The conſideration that he might prove the author of aggravated evil to a fellow-ſufferer in miſery diſtreſſed him beyond meaſure: he looked every where for ſomething to cover the breach with, and wiſhed a thouſand times that he could replace the cuttings which he had carefully put into

the pocket of his upper garment. Searching there, in a foundationleſs hope of finding ſomething that might anſwer the purpoſe without exciting enquiry, it occured to him that he could hang this coat before the hole. The night had been very ſultry, which afforded him a good pretext, and ſome of the rugged half-drawn nails were capable of ſuſpending the curtain: he did as he had projected; and when the ſentinel came in, he feigned exceſſive languor, and his ſcheme eſcaped detection.

But his ingenuity ſucceeded almoſt too well. The guard hearing his complaint of the heat, replied in a taunting, tone that he would ſoon be removed to a cooler place. What was the preciſe meaning of this conſolatory return, Arnold knew not; but whether it meant diſmiſſion or a ſpeedy death, he ſaw it would be the deſtruction of his neighbour's hopes: it therefore was a powerful ſtimulative

with him to haſten the execution of whatſoever plan ſhe had deviſed for her eſcape.

Knowing that unleſs he alarmed his guard by any noiſe, he was in little danger of his viſits till the evening, he ventured, as ſoon as he had eaten his morning's pittance, to draw aſide his coat-curtain. The white wood was now gone, and he plainly ſaw into the next chamber, which was better lighted than his, but in other reſpects ſimilar. Oppoſite to the door, and ſitting on a low ſeat, he eſpied the object of his exertions. Her perſon beſpoke a ſuperior ſituation; but grief and diſeaſe ſeemed to occupy a countenance naturally lovely. A ſmile of joy, faint and tranſient as the earlieſt bluſhes of the dawn, darted acroſs it, when ſhe ſaw Arnold wave his hand to beckon her. She came forward, and, in extreme agitation and the loweſt audible whiſper, ſaid: 'If you have any pity,

pity, for Heaven's ſake aſſiſt me to eſcape from this horrible confinement. You have done much for me, yet much remains to be done.'—She pauſed as if waiting for ſome word of encouragement, but Arnold too well knew the vigilance of his guard: he could reply only by geſtures: he bowed his head in token of obedience; he croſſed himſelf as a ſign of his religious faith, and having raiſed his eyes to Heaven and briefly ſupplicated the aſſiſtance of St. Leonard, he, by his looks, gave the lady confidence to proceed.

'From the room where you are,' continued ſhe, ſtill whiſpering, 'there is a vaulted paſſage that leads into the foreſt. To find the entrance to it, you muſt feel for a ſmall ring in one of the boards of the floor near the fartheſt corner: pull at this ring, and you will ſoon diſcover the method of getting out. You will ſee a door, and if you can open that,

that, many turnings: take the two firſt to the right, paſs one to the left, and take the next to it, and then follow the winding path till it brings you to an opening on your right, where you will ſee the trees of the foreſt. This opening will bring you out under a hill, which you muſt keep cloſe under till you ſee the high road: follow that, and it will lead you firſt to a ſmall lake, and then to a cottage. Go there, and enquire for Labie, or his wife, and deſire them inſtantly to ſend a man and two horſes to the entrance under the hill, where I will endeavour to meet them before day-break.'

Had the whole univerſe depended on his ſilence, the animated Zulig could not now have forborne ſpeaking: he ſaw the impractability of the ſcheme this wretched priſoner had planned. The aperture in the door was far too ſmall for a human being to eſcape through; and though

though he had looſened the bars, there was a lock which yet remained to be forced. He therefore haſtily, but in a low voice, anſwered, that her ſcheme was impracticable till ſome method could be found to open the door between them.

Theſe few words, though uttered with the utmoſt caution, were unfortunately ſufficient to call the attention of Zulig's jailor, who entered his cell before the lady could reply. The undaunted Swiſs, inſtantly as he heard the key turn, comprehended his danger, and gave himſelf and his deſign up for loſt: he turned from the door where he ſtood and faced his enemy — 'What voice was that I heard?' ſaid the ſentinel. — 'Mine,' replied his priſoner.

To his great joy and ſurpriſe the guard, after receiving this brief anſwer, retired without perceiving what of all things it was deſirable to conceal. Arnold

nold had, in turning from the important door, accidently placed himſelf in ſuch a direction that his perſon covered the hole; and he now re-viſited it to ſee how the lady fared. Her he ſaw ſunk on the floor, overpowered, as he concluded, by the terror of the moment. To afford her any aſſiſtance was impoſſible; for even could he have alarmed his guard, under pretence that he had heard ſome one in the next apartment fall, the very caution he uſed might be fatal to her, as the white wood was not againſt the hole, and conſequently their intercourſe muſt have been diſcovered.

He was therefore, however repugnant it was to his compaſſionate feelings, compelled by prudence to leave her in the ſtate he had ſeen her in. He again hung up his coat to cover the ſpace in caſe of a ſurpriſe, and began to think what courſe he had beſt take, and how he could ſerve this unhappy female. He had

had foreſeen, even while he was receiving her directions, the neceſſity of his returning to aſſiſt her in eſcaping; but when he conſidered the intricacy and the probable length of the paſſage he was to wind through, he much doubted the poſſibility of his executing his commiſſion, and regaining his apartment before his eſcape muſt be diſcovered.

Unpromiſing as were theſe circumſtances, he yet preferred a bold experiment to that prudent inactivity from which no good could poſſibly reſult. He again looked into his neighbour's apartment, and was much comforted by ſeeing that ſhe had recovered and thrown herſelf on her bed. He now reſolved to follow her directions without delay, to return with the utmoſt expedition, and to bring with him tools fit for drawing back the lock, or removing one of the pannels of the door.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

ARNOLD ſoon diſcovered the ring to which the lady had directed him; and though he had prudently reſolved to attempt nothing till his troubleſome guard had quitted him for the night, his natural curioſity and impatience prompted him to examine what it concealed. Pulling at it, he drew up a ſmall piece of wood, under which he ſaw a trap-door with many bolts: theſe he tried to ſtir, and found they moved without much difficulty; but they were ruſty, and making a ſqueaking noiſe as he looſened them, they alarmed the ſentinel, who entered juſt as the laſt was unfaſtened. Zulig heard his unwelcome ſtep two moments before

before he entered: the firſt moment was panic, the next intrepidity: he had juſt time to replace the piece of wood he had taken up, and to ſit down on the ſpot. His guard looked in, bid him be quiet, and, as uſual, left him.

All farther attempts he poſtponed till his guard ſhould have quitted him for the night. His ſupper was brought early in the evening: and Arnold, under pretence of indiſpoſition, expreſſed a wiſh that he might be ſuffered to retire to reſt, and remain uninterrupted in his ſleep till the morning. The man ſeemed very well ſatisfied that he ſhould do ſo, having, perhaps, no objection to a quiet night's reſt for himſelf.

As ſoon as he was gone, his priſoner, leaving his coat ſtill hanging againſt the breach in the door, proceeded to examine the ſubterraneous paſſage. The light juſt ſerved to ſhew him the ſpot again,

again, and he ſucceeded in raiſing the trap door without noiſe—he deſcended through it, and his feet ſoon touched the ground, which was a rough declivity. He walked boldly on, though all was perfect darkneſs, and he could only judge when he came to the turnings that the lady had pointed out by the varying ſound of his feet, and the cold breezes that croſſed him as he paſſed them.—With much difficulty and perplexity he groped his way, and followed his intricate directions, till having turned, for the laſt time, he diſcovered a diſtant opening and the bright light of the moon. His path after this was eaſy, and in leſs than three hours he reached the little lake and the cottage.

An old man was the firſt perſon Arnold rouſed from ſleep: he aroſe willingly and quickly, and ſeemed at once ſhocked and overjoyed at the meſſage given to him. Calling to his wife, who

was

was in bed in an inner room, he bid her thank God and the virgin who had heard their prayers for *the Counteſs* and had ſaved her life. ‘ What Counteſs? ſaid Arnold.—‘ The Counteſs de Lubenne,’ replied the old man : ‘ are not you ſent by her?’

Zulig inſtantly called to mind that this was the name of the lady whom the Baron d’Aubrun had ſpoken of as his wife, and whom he thought drowned. With redoubled earneſtneſs he repeated her commands, and accelerated the execution of them. While he was aſſiſting the old man to prepare the horſes, he learnt that the Counteſs, weary of wandering to avoid the fury of her huſband’s zeal, had reſolved to ſurrender herſelf to it; and for this purpoſe, having left her daughter with a friend, there to remain till ſhe had learnt the diſpoſition of her huſband, had returned to Chateau d’Aubrun, which having been,

as

as the cottagers afterwards underſtood, ſuddenly ſummoned and taken by the Hugonots the day before, ſhe was made priſoner by their ſcouts, before the country knew the place was beſieged. This intelligence, the man ſaid, they had received from a ſervant who had attended the counteſs into France, but who, running away as ſoon as he ſaw the ſoldiers approach, could give no account of her fate.

Arnold's delighted imagination inſtantly comprehended the extent of the good work he was employed in.—He had ſped ſo well in leaving the caſtle, that he doubted not he ſhould return long before his guard viſited his apartment, and hoped he ſhould be able immediately to releaſe the unfortunate lady, as the cottager, Labie, had furniſhed him with ſuch inſtruments as were fit to remove the door-pannel without noiſe.—He thought with rapture

ture on recovering the ſuppoſed-loſt Counteſs, and the joy ſhe muſt feel at hearing how repentance had operated on her huſband; but his tranſports were ſomewhat abated when he aſked himſelf where he was to find the Baron, whom he had in vain ſought at his cell, and who, perhaps, had fallen a victim to grief and deſpair. Still, however, to reſtore the Counteſs to liberty, was an object of ſufficient importance, and his ardour was not damped.

The horſes were ſoon ready, and the moon yet lent her friendly aid, when Arnold, accompanied by Labie, and his ſon, departed from the cottage all on horſeback. Labie's wife had thoughtfully furniſhed Arnold with ſomething cordial to chear the ſpirits of her dear lady, and now being provided with all things neceſſary for her releaſe and eſcape, they made the beſt of their way to the hill. It was not ſo eaſy to find the entrance

entrance as to come out from this paſſage, and ſo much time was loſt in the ſearch, that the moon had dropped from the horizon, and they were left in darkneſs, for which, however, they had, in their imagination, a remedy, as Arnold had requeſted at the cottage a candle and lantern to return through the hollow way with. Young Labie, who was the bearer of this comfort, inſtantly prepared to make uſe of it; but untowardly he had in his hurry omitted to furniſh the ſafeguard of the light with the very thing it was to guard: in truth, he had brought the lantern without the candle.

What was now to be done? 'Tis eaſier to relate what was done: the father in a rage at his ſon's negligence, began to rate him loudly: the lad vehemently replied in his defence, and the old man, though in the dark, following the guidance of his voice, attempted to ſtrike him.

him. In the fury of his rage, the intemperate father forgot the intereſt he came to ſerve, and when he aimed the blow at his ſon, had dropped from his hand the reins of two of the horſes which he had led after they diſmounted to find the cave. The beaſts, aware of their liberty, made the natural uſe of it, and the gradually-leſſening ſound of their hoofs ſoon informed the diſputants what the idle conteſt had coſt them. Experience, notwithſtanding, had not ſufficiently admoniſhed them, and continuing their quarrel with increaſing animoſity, they left Arnold to ſeek the entrance unaſſiſted by their endeavours. He had ſoon found the inutility and danger of interference, and therefore, faſtening the horſe he had led to a tree he had accidentally blundered on, he proſecuted his ſearch without attending to the father or ſon.

The day began to dawn when he diſ-

vered the opening under the hill, and he entered it with all the haſte poſſible, but with little hope that he could reach the caſtle in time to prevent the Counteſs's fate. He knew that as ſoon as his abſence was perceived, ſuch an enquiry muſt follow as would declare the communication between the apartments, for his coat was the only defence of the breach in the door, and it was not to be ſuppoſed it would be ſuffered to remain there unmoved.

Yet diſpirited as he was by the perverſe accidents of his journey, he deſiſted not from his purpoſe, but went on boldly; nor did he doubt his having kept the right path, till the extreme moiſtneſs of the ground, which he had not before noticed, led him to ſuſpect that he had wandered from his preſcribed courſe. He halted, and going back a few ſteps, endeavoured to diſcover where he had erred; but in vain, the indiſcrimi-

criminating darkneſs refuſed all information. After a pauſe of a few minutes, he judged the difference of the ſoil a ſure indication of his error; he retraced his ſteps, and having groped out a turning in a direction that he thought a fit one, he vigorouſly continued his ſubterraneous progreſs.

The length of the path now again alarmed his ſuſpicions: he walked till he was weary and faint, yet could find none of the tokens that had marked his former way. His path was often rugged and difficult; ſteep deſcents ſurpriſed him, and ſharp acclivities oppoſed him: ſometimes the track ſeemed hewn through a rock; then on a ſudden it was a moraſs ſcarcely affording an inſecure footing. After advancing in this dubious ſtate of mind for ſome hours, deſpair of ever more ſeeing the light of the ſun overcame him, and he ſunk down in all the ſtupor of horror. All

was ſtill darkneſs: the ground he had ſtretched himſelf on was probably at once his bed and his grave: his guilty unforgiven wife, his innocent child, his deſerted fellow-captive, the exiled wretched baron, all roſe to his mental view in the paleneſs of the tomb, and he felt as if the extreme profundity of his ſorrows had precipitated him into an abyſs emblematical of their exceſs.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

IN this ſituation wearineſs invited ſleep to his eye-lids, but terror repelled her approach: he lay ſtill, and in the ſtilneſs fancied ten thouſand noiſes, till roufed into courage by the deſpair of his affrighted imagination, which deemed nothing ſo much to be dreaded as the horrors around him, he ſprang on his feet and proceeded on his way.

His cumbent poſture had, in ſome meaſure renovated his ſtrength, and it failed not till, to his inexpreſſible rapture, on turning a ſharp corner, as his path compelled him, he diſcovered the broad glare of day-light in all its meri-

dian brightneſs. A few minutes brought him out of the labyrinth, and preſented to his aſtoniſhed dazzled ſight, a fertile plain of ſome miles in extent, clothed in all the beauty of the fineſt verdure. Thick woods ſurrounded this natural carpet; and, expanded to his view on the right, lay the ocean, reflecting in thouſands of gay tints the glories of the lamp of day, and throwing from its gently-agitated boſom myriads of ſparkling gems. Oppreſſed by the ſcene around him, and ſinking under the ſtrong emotions of the moſt lively gratitude, Arnold here proſtrated himſelf in humble acknowledgment of the Divine protection, and then continued his journey.

At the diſtance of about a league he perceived houſes, and toward them he directed his ſteps, as well to obtain information reſpecting the place he was in, as to procure food, for which, ſtripped

as

as he was, he could only depend on the charity of thoſe he applied to. His appearance fortunately excited the compaſſion of the firſt perſon he ſaw on entering the village: it was an old woman ſitting at her door, who, immediately on hearing what were his wants, ſpread her homely table before him, and, while he was ſatisfying the demands of hunger, ſhe gave him the intelligence he deſired. He found from her account, that notwithſtanding all his laborious exertions and intricate windings through the labyrinth, he was ſtill in the foreſt d'Aubrun, and within five miles of the caſtle.

The enquiries of Zulig led the good old woman, naturally communicative, to tell him who ſhe was, and what ſhe had been; nor was her intelligence without its uſe; for from it Arnold learnt that ſhe had been a ſervant in the Baron's family, in the life time of his fa-

ther: ſhe knew the Counteſs de Lubenne, and was acquainted with the cauſe and circumſtances of her flight. Of her ſhe ſpoke in terms of unbounded rapture, and of the Baron with equal deteſtation for his cruelty to his lady. In her zeal ſhe rejoiced to hear there was a chance that he had miſerably periſhed, and at the ſame time expreſſed her willingneſs and that of her neighbours to ſerve the Counteſs, if ever ſhe ſhould be found, in a manner that led Arnold to hope that his exertions and her aid might produce the effect to which he alone was not equal.

He therefore told her the ſituation of the Counteſs de Lubenne, what he had attempted for her, and how been defeated. His hoſpitable. hoſteſs ſoon grew intereſted in his ſucceſs, and finding her capable of ſome degree of judgment, he adviſed with her on the means to be purſued: ſhe offered to engage

ſome

ſome perſons of her family to return with him to the caſtle, and to attempt, by open force or artifice, the Counteſs's deliverance. Finding her propoſal met with attention, ſhe went into the village to ſeek the perſons ſhe had ſpoken of, and ſoon returned with three men, who declared themſelves ready to aſſiſt in the releaſe of their adored Counteſs de Lubenne. They undertook for many others of their relations and neighbours, and at ſun-ſet Arnold found himſelf the leader of a company of thirty of the ſturdieſt men in the village, whoſe ſpirits were raiſed to the utmoſt pitch of heroic ardour by a bare recital of the ſituation in which Madame de Lubenne had been left.

About half the little army had procured military weapons: the reſt were furniſhed with inſtruments of agriculture. Thus accoutred, they prepared to follow Arnold Zulig, who, from his

knowledge of the ſtate of affairs within the caſtle, feared nothing remained for him and his colleagues, but to revenge by deſperate fury, the death of her whom they wiſhed to ſuccour.

As ſoon as it grew dark, Zulig and his troop ſallied out in ſmall parties, to avoid the obſervation of any one who might favour the Hugonot intereſt. Arnold recollected enough of the country round the ſubterranean entrance to deſcribe a ſpot on which they might rendezvous, and here having met in ſafety, they halted and held a council, in which it was agreed that one half of their number ſhould go forward with Arnold, ten remain at the entrance, and the remaining five be ſtationed as ſentinels to guard the avenues of the paſſage, who had orders, if they heard no news of their comrades within two hours, to alarm the country round, and to attempt the de-

molition of the caſtle. They then lighted the torches they had brought with them, and entered on their precarious expedition.

That the intricacy of the way might no more baffle or impede his deſign, Arnold called to mind the inſtructions the Counteſs had given him to find his way out, and then went on boldly as before, till he came to the moiſt ground that had diſcouraged him, and made him turn back. Here, indeed, originated his error: the palpable difference of the ſoil was cauſed by the ſudden riſe of the ſprings: the way was the ſame he had purſued in leaving the caſtle; but its appearance had varied. This being ſuggeſted by ſome one of his company when he heſitated, removed his doubts, and he advanced confidently.

Having left a ſentinel wherever he ſaw occaſion, he and his fifteen heroes

reached the place where he had deſcended from his chamber. They halted and liſtened, but could hear no noiſe: thus encouraged, Arnold and his foremoſt man applied their ſhoulders to the trap-door: — it roſe. Intoxicated with hope and confidence, the too ſanguine leader forgot the impoſſibility that his flight remained undiſcovered. This occurring not to his recollection at the moment, he and his companion raiſed the door completely, and the gallant Swiſs entered again the chamber of his confinement.

Not a man flinched from ſupporting him, even when a loud whiſper convinced them that a guard had been ſet in the room to wait their attempts. Arnold ſnatched a torch from one of his followers, and by the light of it ſaw the faces of about twenty men, who ſeemed prepared not to withſtand, but to receive and incloſe him. Zulig, as the firſt man,

man, was the firſt ſeized on: he attempted to advance in order to admit his followers; but after a conflict of ſome minutes, ſeeing a re-inforcement burſt into the room, and already feeling himſelf overpowered, he yielded to ſuperior force, repeatedly calling to his companions to ſave themſelves by flight, but to no purpoſe; for not one would attempt it.

In ſuch a ſituation it was impoſſible for Arnold to learn the fate of Madame de Lubenne; but while his conquerors were binding his hands, he caſt a look of agony towards the door of her apartment, and perceived that the breach they had ſo induſtriouſly made had been repaired with additional ſtrength;—a circumſtance which led him to imagine ſhe might ſtill be confined there.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

THE unfortunate adventurers were carried before the commanding officer of the garriſon, who, in a menacing tone, demanded to know Arnold Zulig's purpoſe in returning to the caſtle thus armed and accompanied. His priſoner, fearing that a confeſſion of the truth might, if ſhe were alive, increaſe the ſufferings of her he had ſtriven to ſerve, undauntedly refuſed all information, and was led alone to a cell under the caſtle. Whither his truſty friends were conveyed, or how diſpoſed of, he was not permitted to know; and, in his ſorrow for the miſery he had involved them in, he felt a multifold increaſe of his own.

His

His diet was now only juſt ſufficient to preſerve the ſenſation of his wretchedneſs, and the day after he was taken he was viſited by one of the reformed religious, who exhorted him to prepare for death: he refuſed all comfort and inſtruction from a perſon whom, as a good Catholic, he could not but deem a traitor, a rebel, and a heretic, and intrepidly anſwered that he was ready to die, and could never renounce his life in a better cauſe.

But amidſt all his ſufferings he did not deſpair: he had reaſon to imagine that thoſe who had been left as ſentinels in the paſſage to the caſtle, had alarmed the remainder of the troop who guarded the entrance, and that theſe would ſpread the news of his detention, and probably raiſe a body of the peaſantry to attempt his reſcue; but a week elapſing, and no effort being heard of, his leſs fervid imagination repreſented the utter impoſſibility

lity of that which he had hoped; for what could an undiſciplined rabble do againſt a garriſon? or what had they to oppoſe to the cannon mounted on the walls.

His time now conſumed in hourly expectation of private aſſaſſination or public execution, and in the morning of the tenth day of his impriſonment he was ſummoned to the latter, and conducted into a large court-yard, in the middle of which a gibbet was erected. The commanding officer was placed on an elevated ſeat at the upper end, and in his countenance Arnold read not the calm determination and unwilling concurrence of a man compelled to ſanguinary extremities, but the delight of a gratified appetite.

No ſign of fear or perturbation was viſible in the object of his power: he continued ſilent and unmoved, till he ſaw

ſaw his unhappy partiſans brought forward to ſhare his fate. He then broke through the taciturnity he had reſolved on, and, with all the energy of inborn eloquence, he at once implored and demanded their releaſe: he accuſed himſelf of whatever could be alledged againſt them: he declared their innocence aloud, and conjured the cruel commander, as he was a man and a Chriſtian, to ſhew mercy and to do juſtice.

His exertions were ineffectual: — his friends one and all cried out that they ſcorned mercy, and would die gladly with his example before them. The man of power, incenſed at their intrepidity, haſtened their execution, and Arnold then piouſly recommended himſelf to the protection of that Being from whom he derived, and who alone could ſupport, his fortitude.

All was hope and tranquillity within him, till one ſtabbing thought recoiled on his brain.—His wife, his repudiated adulterous wife!—Whatever good he abandoned on earth, his religious confidence aſſured him, he quitted for a far more ſubſtantial inheritance; but his wife was by her crimes excluded from Heaven, and eternal ſeparation and impoſſibility of pardon his deſpair taught him muſt be her lot. For his Almeric, ſtill dear as ever, though deſerted, he could implore the protection of the Almighty; but for bleſſings on a guilty woman, who dared ſupplicate unerring Righteouſneſs? for her converſion and admiſſion to forgiveneſs he fervently prayed: his friends, and, above all others, the companions of his fate, he commended to the Divine mercy and retribution, and in all the ſuperiority of virtue and a better cauſe, beſought Eternal Omniſcience to eraſe from the bloody record the guilt of thoſe who thus

thus unjuſtly, and without diſcrimination, exerciſed the authority delegated to them.

The commanding officer, exaſperated at his boldneſs, grew too impatient to allow him time for his devotions, and his farewell to his friends. He again haſtened the miniſters of his wrath, who, now, in obedience to his orders, placed Arnold under the gibbet: his hands were bound, his face was covered, he called out to his companions to imitate him in their contempt of death, and there were only a few ſeconds between him and eternity, when the beating of drums, the violent ringing of the alarm-bell, and the ruſhing in of perſons from all avenues to the court-yard, directed the attention of every one, excepting the condemned ſufferers, to a new object.

An univerſal cry of 'To arms, to arms;

arms;—We are betrayed—The caſtle is ſtormed—The Catholics, The Catholics,'—was heard on all ſides, followed by a thundering diſcharge of ordnance. The commanding officer, pallid with terror, haſtily quitted his throne of vengeance, accompanied by all the aſſiſtants at this direful ceremony, excepting nine, who had been the immediate guard of the delinquents. Theſe men had been wrought on by the courageous behaviour of Arnold and his companions, and now determined to ſide with them. The executioner was one, who, happy in having miſſed the deteſtable office, releaſed the priſoners and pledged his faith to Arnold.

Theſe perſons ſtayed not long in the court of execution; for Arnold's active ſpirit would not ſuffer him to remain a liſtener to the increaſing uproar, and his augmented corps ſeconded his wiſh to join the aſſailants. They therefore advanced

vanced under the conduct of one of the new adherents, who undertook to lead them to a ſituation whence they might ſee what had paſſed, and attempt a junction with the beſiegers.

From this place, which was an elevated ſpot within the caſtle wall, Zulig with concern perceived that the fortune of war favoured the beſieged. The Catholic troops, annoyed intolerably by the cannon from the lower embraſures, gradually retreated, and the walls of the caſtle rang with premature ſhouts of victory. Zulig haſtily left his poſt of obſervation, and deſired to be conducted to the chamber he was firſt confined in. Thither all his comrades followed him, and thence deſcended with him into the ſecret paſſage: with all poſſible haſte they trod the gloomy path, and in a ſhort time gained the plain, and arrived within view of the Catholic army, who ſeemed to have deſiſted from the attack.

A coun-

A council of war was at that time ſitting, and Arnold requeſted an inſtant audience of the chief in command. With ſome difficulty he got admittance, but was heard with attention, as ſoon as he declared who he was and where he had ſerved. 'I come,' ſaid he, 'to offer means of reducing the fortreſs you are before. I know a path by which I will undertake to introduce any body of men you will deſtine for the purpoſe, into the innermoſt part of the building. All is at this moment confuſion within—the ſubterraneous paſſage is not thought on: be quick, and I will pledge my life for your ſucceſs.'

Two hundred men were inſtantly diſpatched under the guidance of the well-known gallant Switzer: he led them to the opening, and, without oppoſition or diſcovery, brought them into the lower apartments of the caſtle, meeting no one in their way; for all but the priſoners

ſoners were on the walls and at the gates.

The detachment from the Catholic army ſoon diſperſed themſelves in thoſe parts where the beſieged were, who, aſtoniſhed at finding their numbers ſo ſtrangely augmented, turned their eyes from the camp below to defend themſelves from the weapons of thoſe within. Arnold and his own party ſought the commander: him they found hid under his bed, trembling with all the cowardly apprehenſion of a baſe mind. He ſuffered himſelf, without reſiſtance, to be bound and dragged from his lurking-hole, and when his capture was known, the ſurrender of the place immediately followed.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

A GUARD being ſet over the commanding officer of the garriſon, and the keys of the caſtle obtained from him, the flag was lowered, and the priſoners were ſecured. Zulig then himſelf ſet open the gates, and having let down the drawbridge, the Catholic troops entered, and their general giving the keys to *the brave Swiſs*, as they all ſaluted him, named him governor of the Chateau d'Aubrun for the king his maſter.

As ſoon as this important buſineſs, which was executed without the loſs of a man of Arnold's party, was accompliſhed, he proceeded to ſearch for the Counteſs,

Counteſs, but without effect. The lower apartments were filled with the captive houſehold of the Baron; but her chamber was unoccupied. Arnold inſtantly went to the depoſed commandant, and demanded intelligence of the unfortunate lady. The anſwer he received was a poſitive aſſurance that ſhe had made her eſcape ſoon after he had quitted the caſtle, and before his flight was diſcovered. This report, however incredible, many witneſſes firmly and invariably corroborated; but Arnold who knew the circumſtances of her confinement, and the impoſſibility of her either getting through the breach in the door, or making it larger, refuſed to believe it, and he began to imagine that a violent death had followed her ſtruggles for emancipation: his ſuſpicions were, however, ſoon removed, and the account of her eſcape confirmed by one of the priſoners belonging to the garriſon, who had been her guard, and who, deſiring

to be introduced to the new governor, confeſſed that he had aided the Counteſs by unlocking the door. On this aſſiſtance Arnold now concluded ſhe depended when ſhe propoſed eſcaping; but the interruptions their brief converſations met with, prevented his learning her ſcheme.

The ſoldiers who remained of the Hugonot garriſon were ſent, with their commander, into confinement in a diſtant province. The royaliſts departed to a place more in need of defence: the villagers were rewarded and diſmiſſed, and Arnold Zulig, now maſter and governor of Chateau d'Aubrun, having given orders for repairing the damage it had ſuſtained, and for demoliſhing the works raiſed by the Hugonots, bent all his thoughts towards the unfortunate Baron and Counteſs.

The houſehold had been ſo ſuddenly made

made priſoners that no one knew the fate of their maſter; but all were inclined to fear that, even if he had eſcaped the army, he muſt have periſhed for want, as he had in his cell no ſtore of proviſions, and all communication with the caſtle was cut off. In this opinion diſmal probability induced Zulig to concur, and he mentioned to the ſteward, who was a ſagacious and careful man, the propriety of fetching from the Baron's retreat whatever he might have left there. The faithful ſervant thought with Arnold, who in faint hope that ſome ſignal of d'Aubrun's fate might be diſcovered in his abode, went thither with him.

The door of the cell, which was faſt when Arnold laſt attempted it, opened readily, and their firſt call was anſwered by a hollow groan, that penetrated to the heart of Zulig. Advancing cautiouſly, they ſaw the Baron ſtretched on

his bed, almoſt too weak to ſhew ſigns of exiſtence. At the voice of his ſteward he uncloſed his eyes, and the laſt ſpark of life ſeemed elicited from them. Arnold and the ſteward kneeled down by him; each took a hand, and tried to warm and rouſe him to ſenſe; but the vital taper was conſumed beyond all hope of rekindling, and the place afforded no help for Nature in her ſtruggle.

In this juncture, and while the Baron's friendly attendants were ſitting on his bed, in doubt whether he was alive or dead, they were alarmed by the coming on of a furious ſtorm, which ſuperſtitious minds would have deemed the tremendous ſummons which the ſoul of d'Aubrun awaited. Rouſed by the rattling of the thunder, he again opened his eyes, and at the inſtant a nearer noiſe was heard as of ſome one clamorous for admittance. Arnold roſe, and

going towards the door of the cell, met a man, in appearance a traveller, who courteouſly pleaded ſtreſs of weather as an excuſe for his intruſion. Arnold briefly requeſted him to be ſtill, by telling him the ſituation of the dying Baron, and having placed him in the moſt diſtant part of the cell, was leaving him, when he perceived him take from within his boſom a bottle, of which he drank, as of a preſervative againſt the bad effects of the weather.

At once it occurred to Arnold that this was a cordial, and that it might be of ſervice to the Baron. He begged a ſmall quantity, which the ſtranger gladly gave, and which the dying man was able to ſwallow. More of it cautiouſly adminiſtered recovered him to his ſenſes, and the ſtorm being over, the traveller, who was in haſte, departed, promiſing in his way to give notice at the caſtle of the ſituation of its maſter,

and to ſend thence ſuch help as was neceſſary for his reſtoration. This coming in time, had the deſired effect; and in the afternoon of the following day the Baron was ſo far revived as to be able to ſpeak. At intervals he ſaid that he had left the cell on the approach of the army, which he had diſcovered from the neighbouring hill; that trouble of mind and diſeaſe of body had prevented his ſeeking the food which the earth afforded him, and that having no other ſupply, his ſtrength had utterly failed for want of ſuſtenance.

When once brought to his natural ſtate of recollection it was eaſy to recall his remembrance of his *quondam* Swiſs acquaintance, who informed him of what had paſſed, modeſtly veiling his own ſhare in the happy event he recited, and diſtantly hinted the poſſibility that Madame de Lubenne had not periſhed in the way the Baron had conjectured;

tured; he caught at the ſoothing ſounds, and, in his frantic joy, yielded to the terms on which Zulig offered to aſſiſt in ſeeking her, which were, that he ſhould quit the ſolitary life he had devoted himſelf to, and returning to his caſtle reſume his place in ſociety. To the caſtle therefore the Baron, the Switzer, and the ſteward returned in a few days, and the two former took joint poſſeſſion of it, the one as its patrimonial lord, the other as its military governor.

CHAP. XV.

NOT a day paſſed without ſome exertion to recover Madame de Lubenne, or ſome addition to the rewards offered for diſcovering her or bringing intelligence of her, and their hopes were frequently raiſed and depreſſed by the various and contradictory reports they obtained. Sometimes a lady, exactly anſwering the deſcription of her, had been found drowned. Sometimes a lady and a female child had been ſeen to embark at one of the French ports. Sometimes ſhe was known to be in one place living in eaſe and comfort; at other times the relators had ſeen her begging her bread. Much error and more impoſition

poſition ſerved to perplex and miſlead her anxious friends, and no fate could be deviſed for her and her daughter, which they were not ſaid to have experienced; but in a little time all rumour ceaſed, and Arnold and the Baron were compelled to agree in opinion, that misfortune had put an end to the Counteſs's life, and that, though her child might have ſurvived her, it was in vain to ſeek her.

After ſome months of unwearied fruitleſs enquiry, the affliction of the Baron became ſettled chagrin, and it was only from the example and encouragement of Zulig that he learnt to bear his calamities with patience. He would liſten with eagerneſs and tears to the recital of Arnold's domeſtic diſtreſſes; he deplored with him the blaſt his comforts had received; but yet could not confeſs himſelf equalled in misfortune. A friendſhip formed by accident, and cemented

by eſteem, ſympathy, and gratitude, was eſtabliſhed between them, and each found in the other a powerful mitigation of his ſorrows.

To divert the melancholy which, in ſpite of all endeavours, will thicken over inactive minds, Zulig propoſed to the Baron their engaging in the ſervice of the crown againſt the Hugonot malcontents. To this reſolution his former defection was the only impediment, and Arnold ſet himſelf to remove it. They went together to Fontainbleau, where the Court then reſided; the Baron's rank and family importance procured him pardon and an honourable ſituation in the king's houſehold troops, and the name of Arnold Zulig was wealth, was pedigree, was power, wherever it was announced. He had rank and pay aſſigned him in a corps of his own countrymen.

The campaign opened in the enſuing ſpring,

ſpring, which was that of 1567, with more cautious deliberation than active courage. Six thouſand Swiſs entered France in the beginning of the ſummer, and the hopes and eyes of the kingdom were directed towards them. Their commander, Colonel Pfiffer, was a ſoldier of celebrated conduct and ſkill, and Arnold was happy in ſerving near his perſon in ſeveral ſkirmiſhing actions; but when the autumn drew on, he felt the mortification of conſcious abilities in conſidering how little had been attempted, and how much leſs executed, in which he could gain honour. The camp had been, as it were, removed to the cabinet, and the pen had been a more uſeful weapon than the lance or ſword.

An unlooked-for circumſtance, nevertheleſs, aroſe to allay his regret, and a call for his exertions atoned for the dull ſecurity of the campaign. Towards

the cloſe of the month of September, the court being then at Monceaux, a palace of the Queen mother's, it was diſcovered that the inſurgents had formed a plan for attacking the place, and getting the perſons of the royal family into their power. The conſternation, into which the diſcovery threw the whole court, made it impoſſible for thoſe moſt intereſted to deliberate with coolneſs and judgement on the means by which they might avoid the imminent danger. In council the opinions were almoſt as numerous as the ſpeakers; but no one could be followed which was not attended with manifeſt inconvenience. In this diſtraction, Colonel Pfiffer having conſulted his officers, and ſecured their concurrence, begged an audience of the council; and being introduced into the preſence of the King and Queen, and the lords aſſembled, he, as the great hiſtorian of that war relates, beſought his Majeſty with weighty and earneſt words,

not

not to ſuffer himſelf to be beſieged in ſo contemptible a place, by an inſurrection of his rebellious ſubjects; but that he would be pleaſed to truſt his perſon, and that of the Queen his mother to the courage of the Switzers, who, ſix thouſand ſtrong, would undertake, with the points of their pikes, to open a way through the middle of any number of his enemies.

The convoy was accepted with every honourable acknowledgement; the court left Monceaux, and were in their march attacked and grievouſly annoyed by the Hugonot troops, whom nothing ſhort of the valour and ſkill manifeſted by the Swiſs could have diſappointed in their hope of ſeizing the royal family. They reached Paris in ſafety, and this ſucceſsful exploit raiſed the eſtimation of Helvetian bravery ſtill higher than ever.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

THE vigilance of the contending armies admitted of relaxation till the close of the following year, when the extreme inclemency of the winter obliged them to a ceſſation of arms. The Baron and his friend Zulig retreated to Chateau d'Aubrun, there to await the return of ſpring; and in this ſituation of leiſure and inactivity, each found melancholy returning to take poſſeſſion of his mind. Some exertion was neceſſary to chace the gloomy demon; but none that his imagination ſuggeſted to him ſuited the temper of Zulig, excepting that which he ſhould have ſhunned. Night and day he was haunted with a ſtrong deſire to

to reviſit Switzerland: a wiſh ſo wild and ſo contrary to all principles of prudence, that he for ſome time dared not diſcloſe it even to the Baron. At laſt his friend, obſerving a reſtleſs uneaſineſs about him, queſtioned him as to the cauſe of it; and having learnt from whence it proceeded, he not only forbore all cenſure of his deſire, but offered him his company in the journey.

The meaſure once agreed on was ſoon put in execution, and, without regard to the unfavourable ſeaſon of the year, Arnold conducted the Baron to the ſpot that had been at once the imagined ſeat of his felicities and the theatre of his woes. Here new diſtreſſes were prepared for him: his old uncle, John Zulig, was dead, and had bequeathed the guardianſhip of Almeric to a diſtant relation near Saltzburg, in Bavaria; for which place a truſty ſervant of John's had ſet out ſome months before with the child.

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The only reward of Arnold's painful journey was thus ſnatched from him. The inclemency of the winter made his proceeding ſo far into Germany too hazardous to be attempted; he was on this account forced to poſtpone the undertaking, and now thought of nothing more than immediately quitting a place where every object renewed his afflictions. Intelligence of his wife was forced on him: he heard that ſhe had removed from the retirement he had placed her in, and now lived wholly with her lover in the moſt private manner.

The place of her abode her huſband might have learnt, had he not ſhut his ears againſt the information; but how deſirous ſoever he was of avoiding it, it was communicated by accident. Having made a ſhort ſtay in Switzerland, to ſhun the increaſing ſeverity of the winter, he and the Baron haſtened their return

return into France, and arriving in a town of Franche Comté, which they found agreeably ſituated, they propoſed halting there for a day. It happened to be a high feſtival, and the Baron, whoſe mind had a ſtrong bent towards religious exerciſes, propoſed their being preſent at the celebration of maſs. Arnold did not object, and accordingly they went together to the principal church of the place. In coming out after ſervice, Zulig diſcovered, amongſt the variety of countenances in the croud, that of his Bertolda.—Unwilling to point out one who was ſtill ſo dear to him, to the gaze even of his friend, he ſuffered her to paſs unnoticed, and contented himſelf with watching her. He ſaw that ſhe led by the hand a little girl, and that ſhe was preſently joined by a young man, who, though of a diminutive figure, had a graceful perſon and a moſt engaging countenance. He was near enough to hear him addreſs her in

words

words of affection; and when ſhe replied, in language equally endearing, it was in vain that he tried to conceal his emotion from the Baron. Before he could inform him of the cauſe, Bertolda was out of ſight, and d'Aubrun remained mortified that he had miſſed the opportunity of ſeeing a perſon in whoſe actions his friendſhip for Arnold had highly intereſted him.

From this place Zulig now hurried with impetuous haſte, notwithſtanding the Baron's earneſt wiſh that he would rather remain there, and endeavour to find out Bertolda, that he might learn from her whether ſhe were yet diſpoſed to clear her reputation by the diſcovery ſhe pretended to be withheld from by a promiſe, or whether her conduct acquitted her huſband's judgement of and ſeparation from her. He offered, provided Arnold would meanwhile ſtay in the town, to take the whole trouble of ſeeking

ſeeking her, and of an interview with her; but he who thought himſelf moſt intereſted declined his propoſal, dreading again to undergo the miſery he had encountered when his ſuſpicions were firſt awakened.

It was now the Baron's office to chear the drooping ſpirits of him, whoſe kind endeavours he had experienced when plunged in a ſtill deeper abyſs of melancholy: and for this purpoſe he propoſed, that inſtead of returning to ſpend the interval preceding the campaign at Chateau d'Aubrun, they ſhould viſit ſome of the principal cities of France. They had ſpent two months in various places, much to the advantage of Zulig's mind, and were making the beſt of their way to the Baron's caſtle in order to prepare for martial toils, when, in the middle of a large plain near Auvergne they were overtaken by the evening, and by ſuch a ſtorm as made them look round for the

the readieſt ſhelter. The lights in a ſuperb edifice were viſible through the darkening gloom, and, revived by the ſight, they immediately made toward it.

The ſtorm of wind and rain was become terrific by the time they arrived at the gates, where happily they found an eaſy admittance. The caſtle was that of Canbruy, and was the reſidence of the powerful Duke de Melluis, a man well known to the Baron, as having been an implacable enemy to his father, and whom report pronounced to be of a temper the moſt unforgiving, obſtinate, and ferocious, though he was a man of courage and integrity, and in his outward deportment aſſumed the appearance of affability and munificence.

Before ſuch a man the Baron judged it imprudent for him to appear in his proper character, leſt he might be forced to hear the memory of his father inſulted

while

while he had not the power of avenging him, or be detained as a fit object of the Duke's reſentment. For this reaſon, when the maitre d'hotel, who had courteouſly received and entertained them, deſired to know by what names he might announce their arrival to his lord, he gave him only that of Zulig, deſigning to paſs for the brother of his friend. Arnold concluding he had ſome hidden reaſon for his caution, was eaſily ſilenced by a look, and the Baron at the firſt opportunity explained his motive for this prudent deception.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

THE Duke de Melluis returned the moſt courteous anſwer by the maitre d'hotel, who had left the Baron and Arnold to acquaint his lord of their arrival. He deſired they would make his caſtle their abode as long as it was agreeable to them, and with abundance of apologies excuſed himſelf for not attending them by the neceſſity he was under of preparing for a ſpectable to be exhibited that evening in the great hall of the caſtle, at which he invited them to be preſent. On account of their travelling-dreſs, and the injury they had ſuffered by the weather, the ſtrangers declined the latter part of this civility; but the maitre d'hotel offering to conduct them

them to a private gallery from whence they might behold the ſhew without being themſelves ſubjects of obſervation, they conſented, and went thither.

Soon after they were ſeated they ſaw the Duke de Melluis enter at the upper end of the hall oppoſite to them. He led by the hand a lady whom he placed next to him, and to whom all his attention ſeemed directed. The length of the hall made it impoſſible to diſcern her countenance; but her deportment appeared ſuch as entitled her to all the reſpect paid her, yet ſhe ſhewed little regard to the Duke's aſſiduities, and her geſtures ſoon declared that ſhe was in tears.

The amuſements conſiſted of a dramatic heroic repreſentation interſperſed with a variety of combats, and trials of ſtrength and agility. Singing and dancing were alſo introduced; and nothing

thing was omitted that could render the entertainment a princely ſpectacle. But the ſtrangers regarded chiefly the lady, for whom all this ſeemed prepared, whoſe diſtreſs every moment increaſed, and whoſe agitation could now bear no conſtruction, but that ſhe was diſguſted with all efforts to pleaſe her.

The diverſions of the evening being concluded, the Duke led the lady out of the hall, and the gueſts were conducted from their ſeats to another hall of leſs dimenſions, where many tables were ſpread. They were told by the maitre d'hotel the rank of the companies for whom each table was deſigned, and were deſired to ſeat themſelves. To eſcape obſervation they choſe the place of the loweſt rank, and waited with ſome impatience to ſee who would occupy the upper table, where were only two ſeats. In leſs than half an hour, a flouriſh of drums and trumpets announced

announced the entry of the Duke, who led the ſame lady, and placed himſelf with her at the vacant table. The moſt enchanting muſic played during the repaſt; but it ſeemed rather to diſturb than ſoothe the unhappy fair one. She ate nothing, ſhe was ſilent, and, excepting that ſhe once looked round the hall at the various companies of gueſts, appeared inſenſible to all that paſt. Arnold thought that, in her tranſient ſurvey of the magnificence around her, ſhe dwelt longeſt on the table at which he and the Baron, with ſix other perſons were ſitting; and ſuppoſing that the earneſtneſs with which he and his friend watched her had attracted her notice, he whiſpered it to the Baron; and they carefully avoided looking at her.

The Duke's table was cleared before any other, and he immediately eſcorted the lady away. In a ſhort time, he re-

turned alone, and going round the room to every table, addreſſed and converſed with every gueſt. He enquired of the two ſtrangers the cauſe of their coming towards his domain, invited them to make a long ſtay there, and with the moſt winning condeſcenſion tendered them every ſervice in his power. Arnold was much captivated by his affability: he was a man of an auguſt preſence, about fifty years of age, and in his manners the accompliſhed courtier of his time.

From the banquet D'Aubrun and Zulig retired to their lodging-rooms; but their inclination to reſt was not ſtrong enough to prevent their ſpending ſome time in converſation on the ſtrange demeanor of the lady.

Good manners had reſtrained them from aſking of the ſervant, who had attended

tended them, any queſtions relative to a houſe they had been ſo hoſpitably welcomed to. They were now left alone to form conjectures, and the Baron, who was acquainted with the Duke's natural temper, and had much of the ſpirit of enterpriſe about him, ſoon worked up his imagination to ſuppoſe this lady was ſome ſufferer under the Duke's tyrannical power, and whom he detained in his caſtle againſt her will:—he longed to make ſome diſcovery that might juſtify his intereſting himſelf in the cauſe of one to whom all miſery muſt be augmented by the helpleſſneſs of her ſex. Arnold on the contrary, having received from the treachery of Bertolda an impreſſion no way favourable to women, was rather diſpoſed to attribute what he had ſeen to female fickleneſs and frowardneſs: he ſuppoſed the lady, notwithſtanding the apparent diſparity of their ages, the adored and

courted wife of the Duke, and lamented the misfortune of a man who was doomed by love to a perpetual conflict with the perverse temper of a woman.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

THE two friends concluded their conjectural debate, and retired to reſt in ſeparated but adjoining apartments. At day-break the Baron, on whom the tranſactions of the evening had operated to the entire baniſhment of ſleep, rouſed Arnold to enter again on the ſubject, and to help him in deviſing means of gaining information. No other method had ſuggeſted itſelf to them than the remaining a few days, under ſome pretence or other, at the caſtle, when their attention was called on by a gentle tap at the door of the chamber. The Baron opened it, and recognized the maitre d'hotel, who entered with a countenance full of buſineſs and importance.

He took D'Aubrun aſide, and begged an audience of him on a matter which, he ſaid, was of profound conſequence; but the Baron replying, that his brother was, in all inſtances, the depoſitory of his confidence, the man in the ſloweſt ſpeech opened the affair, by aſking whether they had particularly and with attention regarded the lady who had been preſent with the Duke the preceding evening?

The Baron eagerly replying, informed the maitre d'hotel how highly he had been intereſted for her.—'You will, Sir, perhaps, be more intereſted for her,' returned he, 'when I tell you that this lady, whom you regarded with attention, and for whom you ſeem to have felt great concern, is well acquainted with you, and that from her I have derived the intelligence that you, in your preſent inferior appearance, veil, cover, and ſink, a title you rightfully and law-

lawfully poſſeſs. She, or her imagination miſleads her, calls you, Sir, to remembrance as the Baron d'Aubrun; and though I comprehend not fully the negociation I am employed in, I come from this lady to enquire whether time has wrought any change, and what change in the intemperate zeal you once manifeſted for a religious cauſe. Theſe are the enigmatical words with which I am intruſted: it is your part to expound and reply to them.'

'Not time alone,' anſwered the Baron, 'but the ſincereſt repentance of crimes of the deepeſt die, has wrought in my mind ſuch a change that what I once boaſted as my higheſt glory, appears now to me my everlaſting ſhame. But tell me quickly who is this lady, and briefly unfold to me the myſtery with which ſhe is enveloped.'

'Who the lady is,' returned the ſa-

gacious ſteward, is not in my power to reveal, becauſe it is a ſecret which ſhe reſerves within her own lips; but the commiſſion with which I have been honoured by a lady, whoſe deportment, demeanor, behaviour, conduct, and actions, both in general and particular, have been, ever ſince I have had the honour of contemplating, obſerving and remarking them, highly laudable, praiſeworthy, and commendable, extends ſo far as I will now point out. By the hands, or rather hand, I ſhould ſay, of a female ſervant, who attends on her in the capacity of waiting-woman, I received laſt night directions, or orders, I ſhould ſay, conſidering the ſuperior rank of the perſon commanding, to wait on her in the apartment ſhe dedicates to the purpoſes of decorating her perſon, or rather as I ought to ſay, to the purpoſes of common habiliment; for decoration ſhe hath uſed none while I have

I have had the mournful ſatisfaction of witneſſing her melancholy.'

'Stab me inſtantly to the heart,' interrupted the impatient Baron, 'rather than torture me with your deteſtable prolixity. Who knows but this unhappy woman may be my loſt wife? and who can tell but your accurſed tardineſs may occaſion my eternally loſing her?—proceed this inſtant'—'Accurſed tardineſs!' repeated the maitre d'hotel, 'are my labours, endeavours, and exertions, thus requited? I was but doing juſtice to the manifold virtues of a moſt excellent lady, as I dare ſay ſhe will be proved in the cataſtrophe, and this ſolicitude you peeviſhly and fretfully nominate accurſed tardineſs.'

Arnold at length interpoſed to relieve the Baron from the agony of ſuſpenſe that writhed every muſcle of his countenance; but the profeſſor of loquacity,

inſtead of anſweriug his queries, ſtarted from the ſubject to defend himſelf againſt the imputation of prolixity, and in a ſpeech of ſome minutes attempted to refute what every ſentence tended to confirm. The patience of his hearers could hold out no longer, and Arnold in a higher tone inſiſted on the delivery of his meſſage; but their intolerance had an effect contrary to their aim. The exaſperated ambaſſador grew obſtinate, and indignantly quitted the room whilſt the ſecret was yet in his own boſom.

What was to be done in ſuch a conjuncture? The curioſity of the two friends was more than ever excited; their intereſt was awakened: the reaſons were ſtrong for ſuppoſing the lady might be the Counteſs de Lubenne; but the proof of it was not ſufficiently clear to warrant their demanding her as ſuch. Perhaps the enraged meſſenger might revenge the imaginary inſult by revealing

ing the buſineſs he was charged with to thoſe who would make an ill uſe of it. Perhaps one hour's delay might cut off all poſſibility of extricating the lady, whoever ſhe was, from ſome preſſing danger. Both now concurred in opinion that ſhe was againſt her will in the Duke of Melluis' power. D'Aubrun was inclined to infer from the queſtion put to him that it was Madame de Lubenne; but Arnold rather ſuppoſed her a priſoner of war, with whom the Duke was paſſionately in love, and who, perhaps, might have become acquainted with the Counteſs.

After a ſhort conſultation, Zulig determined to go in queſt of the man of many words, and by humouring him in his circumlocutions, to draw from him the deſired information. With this intent he quitted the chamber, and after exploring ſtaircaſe after ſtaircaſe, and gallery after gallery, for upwards of an

hour, he found the apartment of the maitre d'hotel, but to little purpoſe; for he had left the caſtle on the Duke's buſineſs, and would return no more till the next day. This mortifying information Arnold received from a young female ſervant employed in the apartments, of whom he took the opportunity to aſk who the lady was who had ſupped with the Duke the preceding evening. The girl, a ſimple ignorant creature, ſaid ſhe knew nothing of the family affairs; but ſhe had heard that the Duke had lately brought home a lady whom he wiſhed to marry, and who hated him. She added, that the gentlemen who waited on the Duke's perſon were thoſe who knew moſt about the lady, and offered to conduct Arnold to the apartment of one who was a principal favourite with his maſter, if he wiſhed for farther intelligence.

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This offer promiſing to atone for the former diſappointment, was readily accepted, and the woman having ſhewn Zulig the door, and procured it to be opened for him, left him. An inferior ſervant carried Arnold's civil requeſt for admiſſion to this favourite of the Duke's, who, after making him wait about half an hour in an outer room, received him with all the inſolence and importance of perſons in his ſituation. Zulig, naturally modeſt and unaſſuming, felt himſelf infinitely more embarraſſed than when converſing with the patron of this upſtart; nevertheleſs, as ſo much depended on his enquiries, he would not ſuffer himſelf to be intimidated; but civilly excuſing his inquiſitiveneſs by the intereſt the ſight of ſuch grief had awakened, begged to know the name of that lady on whom the Duke had, in the courſe of the evening, beſtowed ſo much attention. The favourite reddened with anger at

the queſtion, and with threats of inſtantly informing his lord of this offence againſt all decorum, diſmiſſed the enquirer in ignorance.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

WHILE Arnold was thus employed, the Baron, weary of expecting his return, had quitted his chamber, and was walking about the houſe in queſt of him. He deſcended one flight of a grand ſtaircaſe, and on his left hand ſaw a long paſſage with a window at the end, from whence there was a view of an open country. Bewildered as he was, he wiſhed to find out the relative ſituation of the houſe, and therefore went up to the window, where he endeavoured to recogniſe ſome of the objects in the proſpect. As he ſtood, he heard low voices near him, and directing his eyes to the ſide whence they iſſued, he ſaw through ſeveral apartments,

ments, the doors of which were open, another door half closed; and a young woman, who seemed to be holding a conversation with some one within, soon after came forward and looked out, as if in expectation. D'Aubrun, happy to see any thing that could speak, went up to her, and was beginning to enquire his way to the apartments of the maitre d'hotel, when she, putting her finger to her lips as if to enjoin silence, left him. She presently returned, and in a low voice said, 'My lady will be very glad to see you, Sir—she has been very uneasy at not hearing from you; but you must be as still as possible, or you will be overheard, for the Duke sleeps in the next room, and rises early.'

D'Aubrun, who knew not what he was to expect, or what he might not hope, readily followed the waiting-woman, and entering an inner apartment, beheld, in the emaciated person of the lady

lady who had rouſed his curioſity, his loſt, his injured wife. Joy, aſtoniſhment, gratitude to Heaven, and the deepeſt ſhame, all tore his breaſt with the moſt conflicting violence, while ſhe, whoſe emotions were reſtrained by the neceſſity of ſilence, fell on his boſom and diſſolved into tears.

Some minutes elapſed before the one could aſk, or the other give, any explanation of this myſterious rencontre; but when Madame de Lubenne had wept herſelf into calmneſs, and had learnt her huſband's change of principles, ſhe gave him the ſubſequent account of herſelf.

'On quitting you at the camp I returned home, and having taken what money I had at hand, fled with my child, without knowing whither. I choſe only one ſervant to attend me, and ſhe deſerting me, I ſaw I had nothing

thing but the Providence of God and the aid of our Bleſſed Lady to ſupport me. Coming to the ſide of a rivulet, which I was to croſs, I abandoned all the proviſion of clothes I had made for myſelf and daughter, and claſping the dear object of my protection in my arms, I committed myſelf with her to the water. It was not ſo deep as I feared; I croſſed it with eaſe, and with all poſſible haſte got out of France.'

'Dear Madam,' interrupted the waiting-maid, 'be quick, and let the gentleman go away;—the Duke will certainly hear you.'

'Well then,' ſaid the Counteſs, 'to be brief, I diſguiſed myſelf, and remained an exile, much indebted to the goodneſs of ſtrangers, till, being weary of my life, I reſolved, at all events, to ſurrender myſelf to you; and leaving my

my child in ſafety, I returned into France and reached the gates of your caſtle. There I was made priſoner by the Hugonot forces, who had garriſoned it, and was kept in cloſe confinement in the room next to that which has the private paſſage. I found means to intereſt a fellow-ſufferer, who was in that room: he eſcaped, and went to provide what was neceſſary for my obtaining my liberty: he not returning as I fooliſhly imagined he would do, I was juſt deſpairing, when Heaven turned the diſpoſition of my jailor, and he in pity ſuffered me to depart through the ſubterraneous paſſage. I ſought the retreat I had quitted, and after ſome time engaged a friend who had protected me, to return into France with me. My friend falling ſick, I left her and my daughter on the road, and was coming forward toward Paris, when the maſter of this houſe overtook me, and prevailing on me to take ſome refreſhment

at his caſtle, he ſeparated me from my few attendants, and detained me here where I have now been ſix weeks, and am daily expoſed to all the cruel torments of his perſecuting love. I have repeatedly told him I am the wife of another, but have never given up the name of my huſband, deterred by his ſolemn proteſtations that nothing will ſatisfy him ſhort of the blood of a man who has dared to throw ſuch an obſtacle in the way of his happineſs. Fly then, my dear D'Aubrun,' added the Counteſs; 'depart hence, leave me here; and now that you know my ſituation, raiſe your friends to releaſe me.—Be gone, I beſeech you, from this houſe: it is only the hope that he may one day meet with you, and by depriving you of life, force me in deſperation to yield to him, that preſerves me at this moment from his deteſtable love.'

Theſe laſt words had ſcarcely left the Coun-

Counteſs's lips, when a door, near which ſhe ſat, burſt open, and in ruſhed the Duke de Melluis, whoſe pallid countenance, trembling joints, and inarticulate rage, declared too evidently that he had witneſſed her narrative. The powers of verbal deſcription, nay, all the eloquence of painting, muſt fall far ſhort in preſenting to the imagination a juſt idea of the paſſions expreſſed in the countenances of this groupe. The Duke, in his nightgown, followed by the favourite, to whom Zulig had applied, and whoſe exulting ſmiles proclaimed his treachery, approached Madame de Lubenne, and, with an aſpect that might have petrified the utmoſt ardour of courage, ſtrove to utter his threats. Her huſband, weaponleſs, and defenceleſs, ſprang towards her, and would have ſhielded her in his arms; but ere they could embrace her, and he thus interpoſe himſelf for her, the impious wretch drew

from

from his boſom a concealed poniard, and plunged it in her boſom.

The wretched, the exaſperated, the frantic D'Aubrun, now ſeiſed the Duke, and could he have wrenched the reeking poniard from his graſp, had firſt revenged with it the atrocious deed, and then concluded his own miſeries by the ſame means. But the monſter's rage had turned his limbs into iron, his attendant came forward to his aid, and ſtamping with his foot, ſeveral men, who ſeemed ſubordinate miniſters of death, entered.—They bound d'Aubrun, whoſe attention was fixed not on them or their proceeding, but on the livid countenance of his dying wife. Death withheld the fatal ſtroke till her eyes had once more opened on her miſerable huſband, and then in the arms of her weeping ſervant ſhe ſunk, without a groan, into the ſlumber of the grave.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

THE Baron's faculties deſerted him not till they had this example before them. He then, a wretch abandoned by all comfort and all hope, having darted one thought toward his friend Zulig, ſunk into ſtupefaction, and in that comparatively happy ſtate was dragged to the place in which the tyrant had decreed him to end his days. When his recollection returned, he found himſelf at the bottom of a circular dungeon, many feet below the ſurface of the earth. The ground on which he lay was muddy and noiſome, and the only accommodation with which the place was endowed, was a ſmall receſs ſcooped in the ſide, in which was ſome ſtraw to anſwer

anſwer the purpoſe of a bed. The roof of this receſs admitted only of a cumbent poſture, and his wearineſs muſt be great indeed who could ſeek repoſe in ſuch a ſhelter.

In this dire abyſs was he entombed alive, beyond all hope of a releaſe, and in the rumination of his ſorrows he had nought but the brevity of life, even in its moſt dilated ſtate, to conſole him. Such was his exceſs of miſery that he ardently longed to feel the pangs of death approaching, and was grateful to the malice of his enemy which had choſen for him a puniſhment that muſt be its own remedy. His deceaſed wife, his orphan child, his friend whoſe fate was precarious, were ſubjects that occupied his thoughts, and abated the ſenſe of his forlorn condition. His ſoul was in their ſociety, and he felt no pain but that of the ponderous chain that held him

him down to this mournful ſtate of exiſtence.

Here let us leave this diſciple of calamity, and attend to Zulig, whoſe exertions for his friend now claimed our regard. He had returned to the chamber, and whilſt he waited his coming, revolved every ſcheme that could ſuggeſt itſelf for obtaining the ſequel of the maitre d'hotel's commiſſion. Alarmed at the Baron's long abſence, he left the room, and again traverſed the houſe in ſearch of him. The ſervants, who were now buſily employed in various parts, could give him no tidings of him he ſought; till at length, as he was on the point of returning to wait again in the chamber, he met on a back ſtaircaſe a young man, in appearance a domeſtic, who, with horror in his countenance, told him what was now the current report in the houſe, that the Duke had diſcovered the lady he had in his power

to be the wife of the Baron d'Aubrun, who had introduced himſelf into the caſtle in diſguiſe, that he had murdered her, and impriſoned him.

With this horrible news he received a friendly warning to depart, which he reſolutely diſregarded, and braved the fury and the cruelty of the tyrant to inflict on him a puniſhment he would joyfully ſhare with the friend whom chance had pointed out to him, and calamity riveted to his boſom.

The man from whom he had this information ſeemed deeply affected with ſo ſhocking an exertion of barbarity, and ſtrongly urged Arnold to be gone. He replied that nothing but the hope of revenge ſhould perſuade him to leave the place. The ſtranger, with a nobleneſs of ſpirit above his appearance, commended his intrepidity, and expreſſed equal deteſtation of the tyrant Duke.

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They conferred a ſhort time on the fitteſt means of vengeance, and their converſation terminated in an offer from the ſtranger to accompany Arnold, and join his efforts to extirpate from the earth a man whoſe paſſions and crimes made him feared and deteſted. Arnold accepted the aſſiſtance of this volunteer in the cauſe of juſtice; they determined that nothing done within the caſtle could be effective; and aware that any delay might fruſtrate all farther attempts, they agreed to leave the caſtle inſtantly.

They were juſt quitting the ſpot where they had formed this alliance, when the voices of perſons in queſt of Zulig were heard. He with his wonted courage diſdained to fly:—there was no time for conſideration: his new friend compelled him to retreat down the ſtairs, and then, while the Duke's men were ſeeking him in and about his chamber, he led him through the lower offices out

of the caſtle. Thus they eſcaped detention, and in two days had reached a diſtance that made them defy purſuit.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

ZULIG and his friendly ally, Gelbard, bent their courſe with all expedition towards Chateau d'Aubrun, and having ſpread far and near an account of the Baron's ſituation, ſuch was the zeal and love of his friends and dependants, that in a few hours they had formed a body of one hundred perſons, who were unanimous in their reſolution to force their way into the Duke de Melluis' caſtle, and to bring off, dead or alive, the innocent victim of his lawleſs fury.

From the information of Gelbard, they learnt that the caſtle, though naturally ſtrong, was become, through neglect, a place incapable of defence, and on that

account had been often, during the courſe of the civil wars, abandoned by its owner. They therefore judged it moſt prudent to make no preparations that ſhould induce him to fly, and, perhaps, carry off his priſoner with him, but to truſt to miſcellaneous weapons, and the undiſciplined violence of a ſpirit of demolition, with which the apt minds of the vulgar are eaſily inſpired.

As ſoon as this little army was in readineſs to march, it was ſent in ſmall detachments towards the place of rendezvous, which was a coppice within ſight of the caſtle. Here the perſons who compoſed it all met in ſafety, and, after a ſhort time given to reſt, the moſt able amongſt them held a council on the means to be purſued.

The dead of night was deemed the fitteſt time for the attack.—Their plan was to divide themſelves into five companies,

panies, and as the water in the moat was very low, to endeavour to wade through the mud in as many different places. Four of the companies were then to attempt ſcaling the walls, and ſurrounding the body of the caſtle, whilſt the remainder, with Arnold at their head, forced an entrance at the principal gate. Gelbard, who was well acquainted with the place, made this diſpoſition, and pledged his life for their ſucceſs in making their way into the houſe and ſecuring the Duke.

They now only waited the ſtriking of the clock, when Arnold and his company, who were poſted near the main entrance, heard the drawbridge let down, and the ſound of feet paſſing over it. He inſtantly ſuppoſed their intention diſcovered; but not judging it prudent to attack the party who iſſued, till their hoſtile deſign was manifeſt, he kept his men back and advanced alone,

as ſilently as poſſible, to diſcover what degree of oppoſition reſiſted him.

The moon which was riſing and gave a faint light, ſhewed him that the perſons who had come over the drawbridge were the bearers of a corpſe. They talked aloud, and from their diſcourſe he learnt that they were carrying the body of the unfortunate Madame de Lubenne to a neighbouring convent for interment: he therefore ſuffered them to paſs unmoleſted, which they did without having perceived him.

True courage is generally found accompanied by all the ſofter virtues. The heroiſm of Zulig, as it did not reſult from, ſo it never produced, calloſity of heart. At the ſight of the brief proceſſion he became in tenderneſs a woman; and Nature, that unerring guide, permitted him and prompted him to ſhew his ſorrow, even in the weakneſs of

tears, while they ſerved but as drops of oil on a fire to make the flame of his courage blaze ſtill more fiercely. Pity for the Counteſs's untimely fate encreaſed his abhorrence of the villain who had accelerated it: he turned from the diſmal ſpectacle, and joining his men, more earneſtly than ever conjured them by the ſoul of her, whoſe ſad ſtory had firſt united them, to exert all that ſkill or ſtrength could do for the liberation of her huſband and the puniſhment of her murderer.

The clock had not yet ſtruck; and Arnold's prudence ſuggeſted to him the propriety of deferring the attack till the lights within the caſtle ſhould diſappear. He imagined the buſineſs of the funeral had kept a part of the houſhold out of their beds, and as, however the domeſtics in general might be inclined, they would undoubtedly ſpread an inſtant alarm when they found the houſe beſet, preci-

pitation would ruin the deſign. He therefore went round to his ſeveral companies to ſtop their proceeding, and was extremely diſconcerted at obſerving in that which was fartheſt from his poſt, a ſpirit of mutiny. A fellow of the loweſt claſs, and whoſe ardour had in their march ſhewn ſome ſymptoms of cooling, had excited diſcontent amongſt thoſe he was to ſerve with. Arnold enquired into his grievance, and being told that he diſliked the perſon placed over his company, an exchange was made of this man and five others for as many of Zulig's own party. Thus the buſineſs was apparently ſettled, and Arnold, having fixed the aſſault for two o'clock, returned to his poſt.

He thought fit once more to renew his charge and encourage his men, eſpecially thoſe whom diſcontent had ſent to him. They were ſummoned and ſought for; but no reply was made,

and it was ſoon evident that they had deſerted. Which way they had taken could not be traced: in their temper of mind it was thought moſt probable that they had gone homewards: Arnold therefore conſidered them only as pitiful cowards, who might have done more miſchief by ſtaying, and perceiving that the deſertion was execrated by all the others, he hoped that by this trivial defection a double portion of courage was infuſed into the remainder.

Two o'clock ſtruck; and a profound quiet prevailing through the caſtle, the defenceleſs moat was croſſed in ſafety by the whole body: they took their appointed ſtations, and Zulig was advancing to the gate when the draw-bridge ſuddenly dropped down with a prodigious noiſe, and a multitude of armed men poured in on them from that acceſs, while another troop ruſhed from within the caſtle gate. Every

window was inſtantly converted into a battery: muſket ſhot were poured on them from above; ſwords and pikes aſſailed them all round, and no other proſpect remained than that of an univerſal ſlaughter. The moon, now riding in the zenith, illuminated all the horror, and ſhewed to Arnold in the perſon of the foremoſt man who attacked him, the ringleader of the cowards who had deſerted from him. — 'Die, wretch,' cried Zulig, burying his ſword in his vile body, 'and in hell receive the reward of thy perfidy.' — The villain, falling to the earth, exclaimed,— 'Forgive me, Captain; I confeſs I betrayed you for gold,' — and inſtantly expired

Death and deſtruction now raging on all ſides, Zulig cried out aloud, 'Quarter for my friends, and inſtant death for me.' He let fall his ſword where the uſe of it would have been madneſs, and

ſuffered himſelf to be made priſoner, conſoled by the hope, that if he could not reſcue, he might at leaſt, ſhare the hard fortune of his beloved unhappy D'Aubrun. He was comforted when he diſcerned that many of his men had reached the other ſide of the moat, and were eſcaping, and that he himſelf was the principle object of his enemies' attention; but he was beyond all bearing afflicted by the melancholy fidelity of ſome few of his followers, who, ſcorning perſonal ſafety, clung round him, and eagerly deſired to be his companions in death, as they had been in danger. Of theſe few, ſome were puſhed into the moat, and others butchered under the eyes of their now powerleſs protector, who was conveyed alone to an upper room in a tower that formed one ſide of the gateway.

His accommodations here were leſs bad than he might have expected from the

the inhumanity to which he was captive; but he would have been better contented to have partaken the miſeries of his friend. In agony of mind, and extreme wearineſs of body, he threw himſelf on his bed; but ſleep abhorred the tumult of his ſoul, and fled his eyes.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

THE vanquiſhed Switzer paſſed the night in violent commotion, and early in the morning was viſited by the Duke, whoſe ſtern looks beſpoke a ſpeedy end to the ſufferings of his priſoner: his countenance was pale and haggard; one arm was bound up, and he ſeemed in extreme pain; yet exultation flaſhed in his eyes, and vengeance ſat on his brow in deadly majeſty.—'Frown on me; triumph over me,' ſaid the undaunted Arnold, as he entered: 'thy looks can never be diſpleaſing to me but when they ſpeak peace, for then only canſt thou deceive. Even in this priſon I am thy ſuperior, for no infernal paſſion

ſion tears my breaſt. I envy not thy power, thou tyrant; nor would I exchange conditions with thee. Thou haſt by thy authority committed innocence to an untimely grave;—thou haſt now in durance a man whom thou dareſt not confront; and without one ſingle act of courage on thy part, thou haſt made priſoner the friend who would gladly die for him; and yet with all thy power and greatneſs thou art a very wretch. I ſee the convulſions of thy heart in thy countenance. For what end cameſt thou hither? to ſee him thy priſoner, who, but a few days ago, was thy gueſt?'—'I come to talk with you,' replied the tyrant in a faultering voice, and to know what inſtigated you and your rabble to ſo mad an attempt as the reſcue of the man I have in my power.' —'From others get ſatisfaction,' returned Zulig, 'for no converſation will I hold with a murderer:—the breath of the villain who dared to woo the wife

of

of another would contaminate me:—thou ſhalt know nothing of me, but that I deſire a ſpeedy death, and that, nevertheleſs, if thou canſt deviſe greater torture in ſuſpenſe and delay, I can arm myſelf with fortitude, and appeal for ſupport to a power thou dareſt not call on.'

The rage of the inſulted tyrant, which was preparing to burſt forth in threats and menaces, or, perhaps, in orders for his captive's final doom, now depriving him of the power of utterance, he was borne away by his attendants, in a ſtate little ſhort of madneſs. Arnold remained alone till the evening, when a man brought him a ſupper. The indignant ſpirit of the priſoner kept him ſilent, where he had reaſon to expect inſult; but perceiving the man look on him with concern as he placed his diſh on the table, he ventured to enquire of him what had been the fate of Baron d'Aubrun, and learnt, to his great, but imagi-

imaginary, comfort, that he was ſtill alive, though in the deplorable dungeon.

The jailor's words correſponding with his looks, Arnold proceeded to aſk farther queſtions, and was told that the Duke, having expected an attempt to releaſe the Baron, had armed all his dependents, and kept them ready within and about the caſtle; that a ſhort time before the aſſault, five men had come acroſs the moat, and having ſtipulated for a large reward, had betrayed the deſign to the Duke himſelf, who remained in a place of ſecurity whilſt the conflict laſted; that, being informed Arnold Zulig was made priſoner, he came out into the court yard to ſee him bound, but that being grievouſly wounded in the arm by a man, who was afterwards diſcovered to have been a ſervant in his houſe, he had been carried to his bed, from which he had that morning riſen,

againſt

againſt the expreſs prohibition of his ſurgeons, to indulge his cruel curioſity. Arnold ſtopped his informer to enquire what became of the man who had wounded the Duke, and was anſwered that he was amongſt the priſoners, and he believed, put to death in cold blood ſoon after they were taken.—'Tis Gelbard,' ſaid Arnold—'The ſame,' replied the man, 'I heard expreſs orders given for his execution.'

The jailor, after he had communicated theſe particulars to Arnold, kindly adviſed him to be prepared for death, as he knew the Duke had been ſome hours in conſultation on the means of making it tremendous, and added his wiſhes that he could render any ſervice to perſons ſo undeſervedly ſuffering under lawleſs power. His priſoner thanked him for his good will; but he now diſdained to cheriſh any hope, or attempt making his eſcape.

The

The next day he learnt from his jailor-ſervant that the Duke's wound had brought on ſuch a degree of indiſpoſition as prevented his attending to buſineſs of any kind, and that the fate of the ſurviving priſoners remainded undecided. Every day afterwards, during a fortnight, he was informed of the increaſe of the Duke's illneſs; but as his life was not apprehended to be in danger, Arnold conſidered it only as a tireſome procraſtination of his fate.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

THE human mind, not formed for inactivity, will, even in the loweſt ſtate of dejection, ſeek for a ſubject to act on: his miſery is, indeed, great who rejects all ſubjects of contemplation, ſave miſery; yet even here the principle is evident, and the mind is as much employed as in the buſieſt ſcenes of life. The thoughts of Zulig traced a ſmall circle; but they purſued it with almoſt unremitted repetition, till the ſenſe itſelf ſeemed almoſt worn out, and his eyes alone remained the organs of perception. Theſe were in a few days attracted by the motions of a female, whoſe apartments, occupying one ſide of the

the firſt quadrangle of the caſtle, were oppoſite to Arnold's priſon, and by their extent beſpoke the inhabitant to be of ſuperior conſideration. This lady, his jailor informed him, was Mademoiſelle Treblors, the maiden-ſiſter of the Duke, of a character neither beloved nor reſpected; and the obſervation of a few days taught him to conform to this opinion of her. Her appearance manifeſted a ſevere conflict with old age, and her employment and amuſements were to the laſt degree trifling and ridiculous. Arnold was ſoon aware that he had riveted her attention, and was completely diſguſted by the grimaces ſhe put on, when in his ſight, by her aſſiduity to diſplay her grandeur, and, above all, by her placing herſelf in a balcony whenever he opened his window for air, and ſqualling in the moſt diſſonant manner to the feeble notes ſhe extracted from a lute.

Zulig

Zulig had now been a month in confinement with no other alleviation of his hard fortune than a daily aſſurance that the Baron was alive. The Duke continued in a ſtate that gave no hope of a ſpeedy change, and his power was delegated to one who was true to the truſt; but who had not authority to ſeal the doom of the captives. At laſt, when experience had fully perſuaded him that not even the utmoſt ingenuity of cruelty could inflict a heavier puniſhment than the tediouſneſs of his captivity, a billet was brought to him by the friendly jailor, who ſaid an anſwer would be ſent for; but that he knew not whence the note came: It contained an aſſurance that the perſon who addreſſed him had power to releaſe him and his friend, and that the inclination was equal to the power, if gratitude might be expected as a reward of the ſervice.

Having no means of writing, Arnold commiſ-

commiſſioned his attendant to reply for him that gratitude could ſuggeſt no return that he was not willing to make for ſo ſignal an obligation. Another billet came the next day, appointing the following evening for his releaſe, and his thoughts and wiſhes flew back with more impulſe than ever to the world he had ſuppoſed entirely loſt to him. He endeavoured to learn from the bearer of theſe glad tidings, whoſe joy ſeemed ſcarce inferior to his own, to whom he was indebted for ſo unexpected and ſo valuable an offer as that of liberty; but the man could tell him only that the billets were laid in his room when he was abſent; that he wrote the anſwer, and left them in the ſame place, whence they were daily fetched away.

In the twilight of the appointed evening, all his doubts, whether he was not deceiving himſelf with vain deluſions, were diſſipated by his kind attendant, who

who uſhered him to the foot of the ſtairs he had aſcended by, and there affectionately and joyfully took leave of him. Another man ſtood ready to receive him, and led him acroſs the quadrangle to a lower room glittering with ſplendor. Here he met the wretched, deſpairing Baron, whoſe emaciated perſon and extreme debility evinced the ſeaſonableneſs of his releaſe; but whoſe countenance expreſſed the utmoſt indifference to it. Something akin to pleaſure darted into his eyes at the ſight of his fellow-ſufferer: they were allowed near an hour to converſe, without any other interruption than what proceeded from a cauſe they were for ſome time at a loſs to diſcover.

Zulig was the firſt who heard a noiſe reſembling the ſighs and ſobs of ſome one in deep diſtreſs: he looked round, but ſaw nobody: there were many doors in in the room; but they were all cloſe

ſhut; yet he heard the voice of woe diſtinctly as he diſcourſed with the Baron. At laſt theſe ſounds had continued ſo long, and grew ſo loud, that D'Aubrun, who had at firſt reſolved them into imagination, was ſtartled by them; and Arnold, riſing and approaching the corner of the room whence he thought they iſſued, was convinced that it was a female voice. A door was before him, which, without farther heſitation, he opened. Whoever the perſon was who had uttered the ſighs, they were alarmed by the opening of the door, and eſcaped by another, which was oppoſite to it, ſo quickly, that he could only perceive the lower part of the garment which confirmed his ſuppoſition as to the ſex.

Misfortune had nearly extinguiſhed the ſpirit of chivalry in the Baron: he therefore remained quieſcent; but Arnold, however he had ſuffered, and been diſguſted by the treachery of one wo-

man, had a heart alive to every impreſſion of diſtreſs: unwilling to ſhut out the poſſible gratification of his curioſity, he ſtood for ſome moments with the door open before him. Decorum would not permit him to croſs the apartment from which the apparition had fled, yet much he longed for a more perfect view. He waited not in vain:—the fair one preſently looked out as if to ſee whether ſhe might again venture forward, and though ſhe inſtantly withdrew her head on ſight of Arnold, ſhe was not quick enough in her motion to prevent his beholding a face, in which compaſſion, dignity, and virtue, ſeemed enthroned. At ſuch a ſight, a rock of adamant would have moved: need we then be told that Zulig at once forgot the law he had preſcribed himſelf, and haſtening forward, cried out aloud, 'O ſtop! O ſtay one moment!'—The door was immediately cloſed, the harſh ſound of a key, turned on the other ſide, grated on his ear, and

forbid all his hopes; and at the ſame moment from another door entered the haggard beldam, whom Arnold was uſed to behold from the window of his priſon.

'Twas Hecate ſucceeding Venus! Arnold could not endure the contraſt, and was returning to the anti-room when in croaking diſſonance the matron bade him ſtay: ſhe enquired with intimidating frowns what he ſought: he anſwered by revealing the truth. Rage was ſtill predominent in her countenance, but oily ſmoothneſs was on her tongue. She made Arnold ſeat himſelf by her: ſhe excluded the Baron by ſhutting the door, and then ſhe told the captive Swiſs that ſhe had ſeen his miſery and compaſſionated it, and that if he wiſhed to be relieved from it, and to ſave his friend's life, ſhe would furniſh him with the means. She ſaid the Duke, her brother, had committed the keys of the caſtle to her care, and that

ſhe

ſhe deſigned to uſe them for the inſtant liberation of the two principal priſoners.

'O let me call in my friend,' anſwered Zulig, 'let him hear you pronounce theſe words of mercy—let him join me in expreſſions of gratitude for ſuch ſignal compaſſion.—But ſtay;—conſider, Madam, your own ſafety—ſhould the Duke's vengeance light on you.—O no, I cannot accept ſuch goodneſs at ſuch a riſque—your life may be in danger from his fury.'

'Incomparable man!' returned the lady; 'no, my Zulig; fear not for me; as 'tis Love that has prompted me to this deed of virtue, Love, Almighty Love, will ſupport me in it.—With thee will I fly, and ſome ſmall ſequeſtered cottage in a diſtant land ſhall ſhield us from the ſtorm of power—there will we live in halcyon bliſs, and while on my fond boſom thou poureſt out thy ſtrains

of gratitude and love, theſe arms ſhall ſave thee from the oppreſſor's graſp, and I will look thee into peace and joy.'

The aſtoniſhed Zulig heard all in ſilence, and Mademoiſelle Treblors was compelled to iterate her amorous overtures, before he had power to reject them. As ſoon as his amazement and chagrin allowed him the uſe of his faculties, he anſwered her by a gentle refuſal of her offer to depart with him:—'I have ſtill a wife: I have an infant ſon,' added he; 'let theſe plead for me, if I ſeem deaf to the kindneſſes you would tempt me with: at leaſt, if I appear unworthy of your favour, let me remain a priſoner, and ſuffer my friend, my innocent and oppreſſed friend, to depart.'

Mademoiſelle's fury now far exceeded all her fondneſs: ſhe ſummoned every opprobrious expreſſion to ſtun the miſcreant; ſhe vowed to exerciſe her power only

only to his hurt; ſhe threatened the inſtant execution of his friend, and finding ſhe could not dreſs the grim monarch in a garb that would appal the reſolute Zulig, ſhe called Infamy to her aid, and gave orders to the man who had conducted him, to make preparations for hanging Arnold Zulig, whom juſtice obliged her to puniſh inſtantly, as ſhe had ſurpriſed him in purſuit of her niece, the honour of whoſe houſe would ſuffer much in the eyes of the world, if ſhe were known to entertain ſo baſe a lover.

Such an inſtance of ſtupendous wickedneſs was new to Zulig: his ſpirit would not bow to contradict the infamous calumny, and his juſt anger was overcome by contempt for her who excited it. She, looking things even more dreadful than thoſe ſhe had ſpoken, ordered the priſoners to be conveyed

back to their apartments, and that, without her particular direction, no ſuſtenance ſhould be allowed them.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

AT the time when Zulig returned into the anti-chamber, Hope, the mocker of all human woe, had kindled her *ignis fatuus* flame in the breaſt of D'Aubrun. Liberty is a ſound that can charm all that know its aid to virtue; and deſtitute as the world was of comforts ſuited to his calamities, he could not but conſider his re-entering it as his only chance for the alleviation of his ſorrows: it contained, (but, alas! in what part of it?) the only fruit of his unfortunate marriage. 'My days,' ſaid he, 'ſhall be ſpent in ſearching for this my only valuable poſſeſſion, and my nights ſhall waſte in melancholy recollection of the

wife I loſt by my own unpardonable folly, and in deep contrition for the untimely death I haſtened her to.'

For this melancholy ſcheme of indulgence had he prepared himſelf, when Zulig returned to him, and being allowed a ſhort conference, told him what had paſſed. 'Let us then periſh together,' ſaid D'Aubrun; 'preferable will ſuch an end be to any alleviation of our tranſitory evils that baſe compliance could procure:—let the vile woman enjoy her power in all its extent of cruelty; but never let my friend for a moment accuſe himſelf of my fate. Away with us,' ſaid he to the attendants; 'the worſt fate intended us cannot ſurpriſe us.' They then bid each other adieu, and parted without hope of meeting again on this ſide the regions of immortality.

The Baron was re-conducted to his dungeon,

dungeon, Arnold to his chamber, into which he was locked without ſeeing any one, but the man who had been his guide, and where he remained in ſolitude and faſting till the ſame time the next evening, when the unwelcome lady condeſcended to viſit him in perſon, and to renew with added energy her rejected overtures: ſhe tried arts, which muſt of neceſſity miſs their aim by their contradiction, rage and gentleneſs, threats and mock tears, warnings and promiſes, aſſailed the ears of Arnold, producing no other effects than increaſed obſtinacy in him, and exaſperated fury in her.

The next morning, as if his doom was now unalterably fixed, he was removed to a place, horrid and loathſome beyond deſcription: it was a room ſtill worſe than the Baron's dungeon, for being dug below the foundation of the caſtle, with no floor but the earth, and

almoſt adjoining the moat, the water roſe with the tide it flowed from, and becoming ſtagnant and putrid, ſeemed to defy exiſtence: a narrow window barred was the only acceſs for the light: for reſt no proviſion was made, nor, indeed, did it appear a poſſible enjoyment in this den of wretchedneſs. But theſe miſeries Arnold would have looked on with a ſmile, as facilitating his deliverance, had not one attendant circumſtance of his impriſonment reached the moſt ſuſceptible atom of his nature. The gloomineſs of the morning, when he entered, had concealed from him what the increaſing light diſcovered in all its appalling horrors: in one corner of the den he perceived ſomething lie as in a heap: 'Tis a wretched bed,' ſaid he:—he went towards it—'twas not a bed—'twas the emaciated corpſe of a man who had been doomed to periſh in this abyſs of horrors!

Here

Here was now under his eyes an object humanity cannot look on without recoiling, and in ſuch a place not to ſee it, and not to contemplate it inceſſantly, was impoſſible. Horror on the firſt view made Arnold ſhrink back from it; pity for the fate which, perhaps, ſome one no more guilty than himſelf had met with from the hand of power, drew him towards the corpſe. His tears flowed abundantly over it; but they were tears unmixed with weakneſs; and the natural greatneſs of his mind, by that ſublime chymiſtry which is inherent in the virtuous, extracted from this emblem of his own fate, additional fortitude to meet its approach.

The firſt ſmyptom of faintneſs for want of food he welcomed as the friendly harbinger of his final releaſe. 'Ere my ſtrength wholly fail me,' ſaid he, 'I will lie down by the ſide of my wretched predeceſſor. As my ſituation approaches

approaches nearer his, I feel all horror and reluctance give way: the difference between us leſſens with every ſtroke of the clock, and I ſhall ſoon embrace him as my brother.

He was uttering theſe words to himſelf when the door of his den ſuddenly opened, and a man who ſeemed to loath its horrors too much to enter, ſtanding on the outſide required to know if Arnold Zulig yet repented of his obſtinacy. Arnold firmly replied, 'No, nor ever will:' the meſſenger then ſet within the door a ſmall baſket with a loaf, and a proportionate quantity of water. 'As long as theſe laſt,' ſaid he, 'you have the power of repenting: when they are gone expect no more.' The door was then ſhut; and Arnold, vexed at the diſturbance, and diſdaining to taſte the proviſions, turned from them to re-animate his fortitude by that object which

which a few hours had rendered familiar to his eyes.

The man lay with his face turned toward the ground, and one hand only was extended beyond his body. The reſt of him ſeemed ſhrunk together by extreme debility. A flood of tears again guſhed from Zulig's eyes: he took the hand and preſſed it to his boſom, when, to his ſurpriſe, he perceived, as he graſped it, that a faint circulation anſwered the comparative warmth of his touch. Every recollection of his ſurrounding horrors and inevitable fate now abandoned him: he thought of nothing but the poſſibility of reſtoring his fellow-ſufferer to exiſtence, and forgot that he could but awaken him to an aggravated repetition of all his agonies. Having removed him nearer the light to a place then dry, he began to chafe him, and endeavoured to communicate the warmth of his own body

body to him. His pious efforts ſoon encouraged him by the appearance of ſucceſs; the man ſent forth a deep groan from his hollow boſom, and, at the ſound of a voice, half opened his eyes.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

THE loaf and the water were in an inſtant become ineſtimable treaſures to Arnold, who moiſtening a few crumbs of the bread in the palm of his hand, in the gentleſt accents courted the reviving man to ſwallow them: in this he ſucceeded, and raiſing him, in order to facilitate the difficult operation, he recollected confuſedly the features which were now regaining their form. 'Oh, captain; is it you?' ſaid the wretched victim of famine, fainting through weakneſs.—'Speak one word more,' replied Arnold; 'ſay who you are.'—'Gelbard,' anſwered the man in a tone ſcarcely audible. He then ſunk to the ground,

ground, and Arnold, whoſe general benevolence was now converted into perſonal affection, ſunk with him, unable to ſupport the ſudden extenſion, and as rapid contraction of all his hope.

The vigour of Zulig ſoon returned: he reſorted to the bread and water as a cordial that might enable him to ſerve Gelbard, and repeated his endeavours again to recal him to exiſtence. Once more he was reſtored to an expiring life. In a ſhort time he could take more of the bread, and was refreſhed by a hearty draught of the water. In the joy of ſeeing him apace reſume his power, Zulig loſt all care for the future: he conſidered no longer that the hour was not far diſtant when their ſmall ſtock of proviſion being exhauſted, they muſt both ſink under the deſtiny from which he had ſnatched his companion. Gelbard was yet too weak to ſupport himſelf: he ſeemed not to comprehend his ſituation,

and

and when Arnold called to mind the misery they were incloſed in, he ceaſed to wiſh him in a ſtate of more perfect recollection.

He was holding the laſt bit of the bread he himſelf had but once taſted, to the lips of Gelbard, when again the door opened, and Zulig was called in a voice he was a ſtranger to; he anſwered it, and was going toward it, when Gelbard faintly, though with all his power, cried out, 'Oh captain, do not leave me;' and attempted to catch his cloaths to detain him. 'I will not leave you,' ſaid Zulig; 'truſt my honour.'—The meſſenger again called impatiently:—'Speak,' ſaid Zulig; 'I liſten.'—'Come forth,' ſaid the man; 'I am ordered to fetch you hence, and to carry you before the Duke.'—'Then releaſe my fellow-priſoner,' returned Arnold.—'I have no authority,' ſaid the meſſenger, 'to releaſe any one but you'.—'Then

—'Then me you will not releaſe,' rejoined Arnold; 'for I will not quit him.'

After a parley of a few minutes, the man who expreſſed the greateſt poſſible impatience, conſented to convey Gelbard to a place of more comfort. This was done, and ſome nouriſhment given to both the priſoners. Arnold then prepared to follow the meſſenger, who, pledging his word for the ſafety and good uſage of Gelbard, in a tone of kindneſs and encouragement, bid them not fear, for no harm would enſue to them; but Arnold's imagination could admit no idea but that of his immediate execution. Gelbard groaned at his departure, and would fain have followed him, but this was not permitted.

Zulig was led through many of the ſtate apartments of the caſtle, till he came to one which had a ſuperb bed in it,

it, the curtains of which were drawn as if ſome one was laid in it. A number of attendants waited in this and the outer rooms; an eccleſiaſtic was ſeated on one ſide of the bed, and on the other a young lady, whom Arnold recollected as the beautiful creature whoſe ſorrowing voice had drawn his attention when ſummoned to an interview with the Duke's ſiſter, and whoſe ſpeed had mortified his curioſity.

To this object were the eyes of Arnold riveted, when ſhe roſe, and bending over the bed, ſaid, 'My lord, Arnold Zulig is here:'—the curtain was then undrawn, and while the attendants aſſiſted in raiſing their maſter to ſit up, the eccleſiaſtic approached Zulig, and taking him aſide, queſtioned him as to the crime which had ſubjected him to the Duke's diſpleaſure; adding, that the Duke being now at the point of death, was deſirous of being reconciled to him.

'Tell

'Tell him,' ſaid Zulig, 'that however injuriouſly he has treated me, I freely forgive it, on condition he orders me and his other priſoners to be releaſed.—God forbid I ſhould ſuffer any one to leave the world unreconciled to me, or that I ſhould haughtily exact ſubmiſſion from one whom Providence made ſo much my ſuperior. 'You are brave and generous,' replied the eccleſiaſtic: 'the Duke has been made ſenſible of his errors, and is willing to atone for them.' He then led him to the ſide of the bed, and began an authoritative and pious exhortation to the illuſtrious moribond, to acknowledge the injuſtice and cruelty he had been guilty of.

'Give me your hand,' ſaid the Duke, in a feeble voice—'I have ſent for you to make my peace with you before I die.—You have been brave and an honeſt man; I cruel, and a villain. This girl here has taught me your virtues,

tues, and made me deteſt my crimes. I cannot face the Baron :—I murdered his wife—beſeech him to forgive me:—I am dying, and would fain—O Death! withhold thy pangs while I ſpeak—I would fain compenſate for the ill I have done. Arnold, as I once hated you with the fury of a tyrant, I now love you with the tenderneſs of a father:—had I, as you have, ſought happineſs by the path of juſtice, I had now been in health, or in peace—I fall a victim to my rage againſt you—O how you are worn down with ſuffering!—Where ſhall I find an atonement? Riches are all I have to give, except that which, when my eyes are cloſed, you will joyfully ſeize without my gift.—Here, in the preſence of theſe witneſſes of my contrition and my death, I bequeath to you, in full inheritance, this caſtle, and the domain belonging to it; and may the houſe that has been your irkſome priſon henceforth be your pleaſant habitation.

tation.—And now,' added he, after a pauſe, laying hold on the young lady's hand, who, in deep grief, ſat by him and ſupported him, 'now that you are my heir in this poſſeſſion, take my niece, and may the God, whoſe bleſſings I have ſo miſuſed, preſerve you both in innocence and peace.'

His bleſſing and his life cloſed together, and at the ſame inſtant the young lady fell in a ſwoon on the body. She was removed to the next chamber, while Arnold, powerleſs and mute, believing all he ſaw and heard a dream, ſtrove to wake himſelf from the deluſion. But a few minutes proved its reality, for a deed was preſented to him, executed in proper form, by which the Duke conveyed to him all he had verbally bequeathed him, and with it, by the conſequence of inheritance, the title of Seigneur, or Lord of Canbruy.

As

As ſoon as he could at all prevail on himſelf to credit appearances, and had thanked the eccleſiaſtics for thoſe pious offices which had proved ſo beneficial to him, he was haſtening to releaſe the Baron, and to chear the drooping ſpirits of Gelbard; but paſſing through the adjoining apartment, his humanity was called on by the ſituation of the young lady, whoſe exceſſive grief ſeemed to increaſe on his entering the room, and as he approached her, roſe into fury. With all the reſpect that natural underſtanding and delicacy ſo well teach, to the confuſion of ſtudied forms, he offered to comfort her, imagining that her uncle's death was the cauſe of her violent ſorrow: ſhe would not hear any thing he ſaid: ſhe turned from him in agony, and, clinging to one of her attendants, appeared now to deteſt the man in whoſe fate ſhe had ſo recently and ſo effectually intereſted herſelf.

He ſpoke to her women, and begged to know the cauſe of this ill-founded and unaccountable averſion. 'O,' cried the lady, ſobbing, 'can you aſk?—Do you not know I am bequeathed to you by my cruel uncle? Did you not hear him ſay the words that gave me to you; but never, never'—'Deareſt lady,' interrupted Arnold, 'be calm for a moment. 'Tis true the Duke, your uncle, uttered ſome words which implied ſuch an intention, but theſe words can be of no force; and ſo little regard do I pay to them, that I look on them as raving. Did you know Arnold Zulig, you would be ſatisfied he would not, for the poſſeſſion of the world, accept what any one ignorantly or reluctantly granted him; and were you acquainted with his many ſorrows, you would know that his indiſſoluble tie to a faithleſs woman puts it out of his power to tyranniſe over your affections.

The

The weeping lady, at hearing theſe conſolatory words, turned toward Arnold, and a tear, which ſhe ſaw ſtart in his eye at the mention of his wife, was to her eloquence in all its force. She flew to him: ſhe took his hands: ſhe bathed them in her tears.—'Forgive my impetuoſity,' ſaid ſhe: 'be henceforth my guardian and protector:—'tis a ſhort time I ſhall need your care;—a fire in my heart conſumes me—my lover ſacrificed his life in the cauſe of juſtice under your command, and I go to meet him in the grave.'

Theſe words languidly pronounced, were all the fainting beauty could articulate. The heart of Zulig was torn by ſympathy in her affliction, and by a ſtrong deſire to communicate the miraculous events of the laſt hour in perſon to his friends. Unable to tear himſelf from her, and as unwilling to prolong the moments of his friend's miſery, he

diſpatched an attendant from the anti-chamber to fetch them thither, and, committing the unhappy lady to the care of her women, he went to meet them.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVI.

THE joy of Gelbard was frenzy: that of the Baron the content of a mind to which nothing could be joy. Arnold ſuccinctly related to them what had paſſed; but when he mentioned the Duke's gift of his niece, Gelbard's countenance inſtantly took fire, and, in a peremptory tone, he aſked why he was reſcued from famine to be murdered by a more cruel weapon, and why he was preſerved to ſee the dagger ſharpened that was to pierce his boſom?

A few words explained to Arnold that Gelbard was the diſguiſed lover of the young lady; and Gelbard was ſoon ſa-

tisfied that he had nothing to fear from the bequeſt. The delicate buſineſs of conveying the joyful tidings of her lover's ſafety Zulig took on himſelf, and he ſucceeded ſo well (though ſhe, as did the man who had told Arnold the fate of his friends, thought Gelbard had inevitably ſuffered death) that her fleeting ſpirit ſtood the ſhock, and in a ſhort time ſhe could receive and welcome this very deſerving object of her affection.

Their firſt effuſions of delight being over, their ſpirits compoſed, and the ſtill wretched D'Aubrun a little warmed by the flame of other's joy, the lady deſired Gelbard to relate their brief ſtory; with which requeſt he complied in the following terms:

'This young lady,' ſaid he, 'was left when an infant with an immenſe eſtate to the joint care of her uncle, the deceaſed Duke, and his maiden-ſiſter; by

by the latter of whom ſhe was brought up in Normandy. Before I ſpeak of our acquaintance, it is fit I ſhould throw off all diſguiſe, and appear in my proper perſon, as the only ſon and heir of the Chevalier Dreucourt: his eſtate joined that of this lady, where ſhe lived with her aunt, and there I had frequent opportunities of ſeeing her; but the conduct of her aunt, who, finding my father a wealthy widower, perſecuted him with her love, ſo diſguſted him, that no intimacy could be kept up between them, and on occaſion of a trifling diſpute for precedence between her and another lady of the place, Mademoiſelle Treblors, ſoon after left the province with her lovely charge.

'My father knew of my paſſion; and though he abhorred the aunt, connived at my private correſpondence with the niece. Fired by a hope I had newly entertained, that my perſeverance had

made ſome impreſſion on the heart of the charming Julie St. Valfrene, and deſperately fearing the conſequences of her removal to the Duke, her uncle's court, I followed her with my father's privity; and having ſufficiently diſguiſed myſelf, engaged as a ſervant to Mademoiſelle Treblors, before they reached this place, whither we had come only a few days before you arrived here.

'The ſtory of the Counteſs de Lubenne was kept profoundly ſecret, and ſhe was reported in the houſe to be a priſoner of war confided to the Duke de Melluis' care. Such Mademoiſelle Treblors and her niece thought her till the morning of the diſmal cataſtrophe. It was from my Julie that I learnt what had happened: ſhe ſent me to preſs the ſtranger, who had not been ſeized, to fly, and ſhe approved and encouraged my aiding in avenging ſuch a crime.'

'Think

'Think then,' ſaid the lovely Julie, 'what were my ſufferings when I heard that Gelbard, my faithful Gelbard, had been taken priſoner, was diſcovered to be my aunt's ſervant, and immediately doomed to periſh; in what way I could not learn, and happy was it for my ſenſes that I did not. I ſuppoſed him to have been, with many others, immediately put to death.'

'The Duke,' ſaid Monſieur Dreucourt, 'ordered me to be kept in the place where our Captain found me, till he had reſolved what manner of death my companions ſhould die. The man who had the charge of me was kind to me; but he happening to offend the Duke's ſiſter, was diſmiſſed, and I was afterwards neglected entirely.'

'After all, it is to my aunt that Zulig owes his life and that of the Baron,' ſaid Mademoiſelle St. Valfrene, ſmiling

expreſſively at Arnold.—'I believe I need not remind him of our firſt interview. Finding my aunt had obtained the keys of the caſtle, and hearing by accident that ſhe had ſent for the priſoners, Zulig and D'Aubrun, I, who had become much intereſted in their fate, and hoped I might caſually learn the fate of Gelbard, liſtened at the door of the room were you were with your friend—I betrayed myſelf—you detected me, and I eſcaped. I wiſhed much to have heard what paſſed between you and my aunt, but it was impoſſible. However, I ſoon knew the reſult of your conference, and was ſtruck with horror when I found my aunt gave as a reaſon for her ſeverity your having been diſcovered in purſuit of me. Satisfied that there was ſome myſtery in the buſineſs, and having been told that ſhe was preparing to viſit you under pretence of compaſſion, I prevailed on one of her ſervants to liſten at the door of your

priſon while ſhe was with you. Hence I learnt my prudent aunt's juvenile paſſion, and that in general you rejected it; but you ſpoke in ſo low a voice that my informer could not tell me what reaſons you alledged. With this information I went boldly to my uncle's bedſide: I told him what no one before had dared to ſay to him, that his medical attendants had no hope of his life, and I conjured him to atone for his ſeverity by an immediate extenſion of mercy to his priſoners. Aided by the good offices of thoſe about him, I by degrees prevailed.'

This explanation given, and the thanks of all duly returned to the beautiful Julie, enquiry was made for Mademoiſelle Treblors; but ſhe had prudently decamped, leaving Arnold Zulig, now Seigneur de Canbruy, in the peaceable poſſeſſion of his inheritance. The nuptials of Monſieur Dreucourt

and Mademoiſelle St. Valfrene were privately ſolemnized the ſame evening, and by the next morning all but the wretched Baron ſeemed to have forgotten their recent ſufferings. He, unhappy man! though he ſtrove to join the temperate chearfulneſs of his friends, exhibited an aching heart dreſſed in forced ſmiles; but now ſome little good again ſeemed preparing for him, and he had a tranſient glance of the traitreſs Hope.

Late in the evening of the day following that on which the Duke died, a female domeſtic of the family who had left the caſtle ſome weeks before, came thither, and begged to be admitted to ſpeak to the Baron: her requeſt was immediately granted, and in the preſence of D'Aubrun, Zulig, Dreucourt, and his wife, ſhe communicated the following important intelligence:

That

That the wound which the Counteſs de Lubenne had received had not proved fatal, as was imagined; that after many hours ſhe had recovered from the ſwoon that had followed it; and that her principal female attendant had contrived her concealment, her cure, and her eſcape; under pretence of whoſe illneſs a ſurgeon had been every day introduced into the apartment, and that at the time of interment the Counteſs had been put alive into a coffin prepared on purpoſe, and carried to the convent deſigned for her place of burial.

The relator had proceeded no farther when the Baron, all in a tremor of joy at the news, ſtarted from his ſeat, again to ſeek his wife. His ardour was, indeed, ſomewhat abated, when the woman added to her information that ſhe had in vain enquired for Madame de Lubenne at the convent. This however, was not diſcouragement ſufficient

to

to prevent a farther ſearch, and the three gentlemen inſtantly ſet out for the place they were directed to.

With ſome difficulty they got admiſſion, and prevailed on the lady-abbeſs to leave her cell and ſee them. She at firſt, as if ſhy of thoſe who made the enquiry, refuſed all information, and when prevailed on by the claim ſtated to her, the account ſhe gave was far from ſatisfactory. She confeſſed, indeed, that a lady had been brought thither alive as a corpſe for interment, and corroborated the firſt informer's teſtimony by ſhewing in the chapel the empty coffin: ſhe poſitively denied the lady's being then in the convent, and, on the contrary, aſſerted, that in leſs than a fortnight after ſhe had been brought thither ſhe had left it; but what was her deſtination or what road ſhe had taken could not be learnt, nor any thing more than that ſhe had departed privately on foot

foot one moonlight night, attended only by the female servant who had come to the convent with the coffin.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVII.

IT was judged by all moſt probable that Madame de Lubenne had taken the road towards Chateau d'Aubrun, and thither it was immediately reſolved to follow her. Accordingly the next morning, after De Canbruy had remitted the care of his intereſts and the interment of the Duke de Melluis to the eccleſiaſtic who had attended him, he and the Baron, accompanied by Monſieur and Madame Dreucourt, and with a proper ſuite, ſet off; but their ſearch was ineffectual; for no tidings had been heard of the Counteſs at the Baron's ſeat. He now, quite exhauſted with fatigue of body and anxiety of mind, and rendered hopeleſs

hopeleſs by diſappointment, reſolved to go no farther without a freſh clue. De Canbruy, finding him obſtinate in his determination, would have remained with him, but this he would not permit. Monſieur Dreucourt was anxious to viſit his father, and wiſhed his new friend to accompany him. In this wiſh the Baron joined, and De Canbruy, to avoid adding to his vexations by contention, complied.

They were many days on the road, and he began to be weary of a journey, which at every ſtep carried him farther from his comfortleſs friend, when an accident happened which diverted his *ennui*. Paſſing over an extenſive plain, Madame Dreucourt diſcovered ſomething lying at a ſmall diſtance, which a nearer view proved to be a little lad faſt aſleep. Night was approaching, and her compaſſion was excited for his ſituation. She propoſed halting and waking him,

him, to know the cauſe of his being left thus alone. Her propoſal was inſtantly acquieſced in: they all alighted, and perceived the lad to be a negro. He waked in great terror, and ſpoke in a tone of lamentation, a language no one of them underſtood: he, however, ſhewed no reluctance when Madame Dreucourt took him by the hand, and led him from the ſpot where he was found.

A conſultation was held on what was proper to be done, and it was agreed that they ſhould take the boy with them to the next village, where they deſigned to ſtop for the night, and make all poſſible enquiry for the perſons he belonged to. This was done, yet no one claimed or knew him. The people of the place conjectured that he had been loſt from a troop of Bohemian gypſies who had lately infeſted the country, and adviſed the company, if they would eſcape the miſ-

miſchiefs of pilfering dexterity, to get rid of their new acquaintance without delay. But the boy, expreſſing by his geſtures, and by the emphaſis with which he uttered his jargon language, a great deſire to continue with his preſent friends, and particularly with De Canbruy, they determined to run the riſque.

The remainder of the journey was much enlivened by the whimſical tricks of this boy, whoſe mirth was inceſſant, and whoſe energy of mind found numerous ways to expreſs his ideas without the aid of language. He chattered, laughed, and ſung, as he went along; and whenever the travellers ſtopped, regaled them with a dance. In ſhort, his ſingular talents left no room to doubt that he was of the Bohemian fraternity, and had been educated in all the arts of the gypſy tribe; but it did not appear that he had yet imbibed a taſte for depredation: on the contrary, when money was tendered him,

him, he would turn from it with indifference.

The party reached in ſafety the houſe of the Chevalier Dreucourt, whoſe joy at the return of his ſon, and whoſe cordiality in the welcome of his daughter in-law and the Seigneur De Canbruy, ſeemed damped by ſome preceding grief: the cauſe of this he ſoon unfolded to them, by ſaying he had then in his houſe a lady, whoſe caſe ſeemed equally uncommon and unfortunate: ſhe had been brought thither, he ſaid, a few hours before by ſome peaſants, who had found her ſtretched on the earth in an adjoining wood, apparently ſpent with fatigue, and in extreme need of ſuſtenance. He ſaid her habit and mien beſpoke her to be of no ordinary rank; but that as ſhe had nothing with her, except the clothes ſhe wore, they could not diſcover who ſhe was: ſhe had remained, the old Chevalier ſaid, without ſpeaking or opening her

her eyes, had ſeemed generally aſleep, and always inſenſible: a little nouriſhment cautiouſly adminiſtered ſhe had taken; yet not in a quantity that could reſtore her ſtrength, or enſure her exiſtence.

With one voice Madame Dreucourt and her two fellow travellers cried out, 'Tis certainly the Counteſs; let us ſee her, Sir, we beſeech you.' They were immediately conducted to her apartment, and the amiable Julie, panting with eagerneſs, entered it alone, having undertaken to diſcover how well their unanimous conjecture was founded.

She approached the bed, and gently calling the Counteſs by her name, ſtrove to bring her to her recollection: all endeavours of this ſort failing, ſhe uncovered her boſom, and the feſtering wound carried with it at once conviction and horror. The Chevalier was informed how

how highly intereſting a ſubject his caſual gueſt would prove, and De Canbruy, who thought no meſſenger could make equal haſte with himſelf, ſet off without loſs of time to return to Chateau d'Aubrun.

He found the Baron's melancholy much increaſed by his ſolitude, from which, however, he was eaſily drawn by the tidings his friend brought him. They made all imaginable ſpeed to the Chevalier's, and when arrived there the joy was rendered almoſt complete, by hearing that the wounded lady was ſtill alive, and had recovered a little ſtrength, though ſhe had not yet ſpoken articulately, nor did ſhe ſeem at all to recollect herſelf. 'Heaven be praiſed,' exclaimed the Baron; 'I ſhall again embrace my loſt wife: I ſhall hear of her where my daughter is, and we may once more know peace and comfort. Never again will I truſt this jewel out of my ſight.'

The

The unfortunate lady was lying on a couch when Madame Dreucourt introduced the Baron: ſhe announced his name; but it did not appear to awaken any remembrance. 'Come forward, Sir,' ſaid Madame; 'the Counteſs will, perhaps, know you when ſhe ſees you.—D'Aubrun approached, and took her hand; but what diſappointment and confuſion could equal his, when he perceived that he held the hand of a ſtranger, and that the woman he had been called to claim bore no reſemblance to his wife?

The exceſs of this mortification abſorbed the pity he muſt otherwiſe have felt for the ſtranger-lady, whoſe condition was ſufficiently deplorable. He would inſtantly have quitted the houſe; but the urgent kindneſs of the family oppoſed him. Their attentions, in ſome meaſure, ſoothed his grief, yet every where

where he was wretched; and, after a ſtay of one week, he manifeſted great anxiety to return home.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

IN the mean time the wounded ſtranger grew worſe, and on the day before D'Aubrun and De Canbruy were to leave the place, her death ſeemed rapidly approaching. All efforts to get a ſentence from her had hitherto failed: ſhe had ſaid very few words, and thoſe had ſuch contradictory meanings that nothing could be collected from them. But on this day her faculties cleared; ſhe ſeemed to know ſhe was with ſtrangers, and ſhe uttered many detached ſentences, from which Madame Dreucourt could gather that ſhe had been ſeparated from her ſervants, and robbed and wounded in the neighbouring foreſt. A

few hours after ſhe had ſaid thus much, ſhe was able coherently to relate the buſineſs that had occaſioned her coming into that country. 'I am,' ſaid ſhe, 'a native of France, but ſettled in Germany, where I became a widow. My huſband had a friend in Switzerland, who, dying ſome time ago, bequeathed to him the care of a child, whoſe father and mother had abandoned it. By accident I learnt that this child had been committed to a ſervant to bring to us: we never ſaw him, nor had we heard of the bequeſt when my huſband died. As ſoon as I was informed of it, I ſought every where for the child or his friends; but could learn nothing, except that his father was in France in the King's army. Having repeatedly written and ſent to him to no purpoſe, I reſolved to undertake a journey myſelf to the head-quarters of the army, that no unjuſt ſuſpicions might be harboured of me if the child ſhould never be found. Hitherto

my

my ſearch has been fruitleſs, and I have now no power to continue it. You have been very kind to me, Madame,' added the dying lady; 'complete your goodneſs by remembering what I have now told you, that if at any time hereafter it ſhould be ſuſpected that Graffner and his wife failed in their duty towards Almeric Zulig, the ſon of Arnold and Bertolda Zulig, of the canton of Underwalden, in Switzerland, my dying proteſtations may bear teſtimony for me.'

Theſe were the laſt words the wounded lady uttered. She expired in a deep ſigh, and Madame Dreucourt, who was the only one of the family preſent, was for ſome time too much affected to quit the corpſe. As ſoon as the violence of her grief permitted it, ſhe went to a room, where were her huſband, his father, the Baron, and De Canbruy; and in her ſorrow, not recollecting that the

name of the latter was that of the father of the child Madame Graffner was in queſt of, ſhe related, in torrents of tears, the ſhort narrative committed to her memory. When ſhe ſaw him turn pale and tremble, ſhe called to mind his intereſt in it.

The firmneſs of De Canbruy's temper under adverſity was borne down by this ſhock, and all that the Baron had gained of tranquillity was deſtroyed by the ſight of his friend's new diſtreſs. The ſympathy of the old Chevalier, his ſon, and his daughter-in-law, mingled with their griefs, and the houſe became a houſe of mourning; for not even the little Bohemian was exempt from ſorrow: he ſaw his patron ſad, and he was ſad, ſometimes endeavouring to chear him with thoſe tricks that could heretofore excite mirth, and when he ſaw theſe ill received, joining his tears to the diſtreſs of thoſe whoſe language was to him much

much leſs intelligent than their countenances. Hearing the name of Almeric Zulig frequently, his ear too caught the ſound, and he would repeat it inceſſantly; and, as if he ſuppoſed the grief was for a loſt perſon of the name, he would iterate, 'I Almeric Zulig, Almeric Zulig me,' till at length this melancholy childiſh impertinence was found ſo afflicting to the wretched father, that the Chevalier inſiſted on removing the boy from him.

This was ſo difficult while they were in the ſame houſe, and the poor little lad was thrown into ſuch agonies of grief by the attempt, that the Baron urged De Canbruy to depart immediately. But nothing could prevail on him to ſeek his own eaſe till he had ſeen the laſt ſolemn duties performed over the body of the unfortunate Madame Graffner, whoſe hard deſtiny he took on himſelf, in addition to his many ſorrows.

The day after her interment the two friends prepared to return to Chateau d'Aubrun, from whence, after the Baron had properly diſpoſed his affairs, they reſolved to ſet out, and travelling through France, Switzerland, and Germany, to ſeek the Counteſs, her daughter, and Almeric. They had bid adieu to the hoſpitable and amiable family of Dreucourt, and were leaving the houſe, when a man on horſeback galloped up to it, enquired for Baron d'Aubrun, and having put a letter into his hand, without uttering another word, rode off as faſt as poſſible.

'Tis my wife's hand-writing,' ſaid the Baron, as he looked at the ſuperſcription: 'open it, De Canbruy, for I have no power.'—His friend opened it, and read aloud:

'When will my ſufferings end?—where ſhall this weary head and heart find

find reſt but in the grave?—Heaven grant this may reach my dear D'Aubrun! it is my laſt hope.

'You think me dead: you ſaw the dagger in my boſom, and muſt have ſuppoſed me killed.—O that I might ſay I will tell you when we meet how kind Heaven was to me!—I was carried to the convent near:—thence I ſet out for your caſtle—I was told you were dead; but ſince that, I have heard that the wicked Duke de Melluis is dead, and that you are at liberty.

'On my way home I met with a large party of Hugonots ſcouring the country. I had hired horſes and two men at a little village to go to D'Aubrun with me. Theſe people fled at the ſight of danger, and left me and my waiting-maid in their hands. They immediately brought me hither, and on my arrival I perceived one of them to be your ſervant

Letroi: by conſequence, I was known, and they were ſenſible of the importance of detaining me. I am left under the guard of ſix of them, till they learn the pleaſure of the Prince de Condé, or Admiral Coligny; from neither of whom can I expect any mercy. God grant they may find a ſpeedy death for me! I am ſtill weak enough to tremble at the idea of tortures; beſide, what can I confeſs?

'If I die, and indeed I have no hope of any thing better, I conjure you fetch my Creſcence home to you; I left her with the kindeſt friend that ever diſtreſs met with. Her name is Bertolda Zulig: ſhe fell ſick, and ſtaid behind me at Satins, in Franche Comté, when I was making another effort to come to you. Aſſiſt her, if you can, to find out her wicked huſband, who abandoned her, and tore her child from her arms, becauſe he was jealous on my account, and ſhe would not

not betray me.—Be kind to her out of pity and gratitude.

'One of the leaſt fierce of my jailors has become enamoured of my faithful attendant. She prevails on him to carry this: he riſques his life in attempting it. Adieu.

The Counteſs DE LUBENNE.'

Had all the furies of the heathen world conſpired to rend the human heart, poor De Canbruy could not have undergone greater torture:—he read in hurried accents his own condemnation, and could not at all join the Baron's frantic joy at having it, as he thought, in his power to recover his loſt wife. The one was ſtamping on the ground, hiding his face, and tearing his hair: the other, furious with impatience, made every echo reſound the words, 'My wife, my wife.'—In truth, all vehemence

was pardonable; for Hope had again riſen from the grave, and no exertion of ſpeed could be ſuperfluous, for the danger was preſſing. What words then can diſplay the enraptured huſband's conſternation, when referring to the letter in order to direct his courſe by it, he perceived that in her trepidation the Counteſs had omitted to name the place of her confinement?

For this omiſſion there appeared no remedy: the meſſenger's track had not been regarded, and even if it had been obſerved, it would have afforded little guidance. De Canbruy's attention was now called from himſelf to his friend: his pleaſure he had ſuffered him to enjoy alone, but in his diſtreſs he claimed a participation; and if he could not leſſen his burden, he had a hand to offer in bearing it. After a ſhort conſultation, it was propoſed by the old Chevalier that immediate application ſhould be made,

made, firſt to the King's party, and then through them to the chiefs of the Hugonots, and an unlimited ranſom offered for the Counteſs, which, as they were well known to be in great ſtreights for money, it was probable might procure a diſcovery of her, and her releaſe. On this expedition Monſieur Dreucourt offered to accompany the Baron, inſtead of De Canbruy, whoſe thoughts inclined towards Franche Comté. It was agreed that the Chevalier's houſe ſhould be their rendezvous, and that thither De Canbruy ſhould bring Bertolda with the young Mademoiſelle d'Aubrun and Almeric, ſhould he be ſo fortunate as to find him.

CHAP. XXIX.

LET us follow the footſteps of the Baron and Monſieur Dreucourt, who found the royal army before Loudun. They got an immediate audience of the Duke of Anjou, who commanded there; but received little encouragement in their purſuit; there being no intercourſe whatever at that time with the oppoſite party, and little conſideration to be expected from them. After having ſpent ſix days in a vain ſolicitation for interference, they departed, and taking the road towards Paris, hoped to find there ſome perſons in high truſt, whoſe employments, as being unconnected with the war, might leave them

leiſure to deviſe ſome means for ſo important a negociation.

With this intention they purſued their journey, till an accident obliged them to alter their courſe. One brilliant afternoon, as they were deſcending a ſteep declivity near the ſea ſhore, they ſaw two ſhips of a conſiderable ſize lying too, and at the bottom of the hill before them, a number of ſailors collected together. Two boats were cloſe to the ſhore, to which the men ſeemed retreating with ſomething that it appeared they had raiſed from the ground.

The two gentlemen ſpurred their jaded horſes to come up with the croud; but it was only Monſieur Dreucourt's that had ſtrength remaining for the exertion, and brought its maſter up time enough to ſee that it was a woman whom the men were carrying off. He, having the idea of Madame de Lu-

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benne uppermoſt in his mind, charged them to deſiſt; but they were foreigners, and it was evident they underſtood not his language. The woman ſcreamed as ſoon as he attempted to ſpeak, and by her geſtures ſeemed to fear being forced from the perſons ſhe was with.

Monſieur Dreucourt returned haſtily to the Baron, who was coming up, and not above two hundred paces from the ſpot: he told him his conjecture, and they ran together to the beach; but the ſailors had been too expeditious for them: they had reached their boats with their prize, and were put off. Signs were made to them to return, but they were not regarded.

Another accident happened to increaſe the Baron's earneſtneſs, and complete his mortification. Monſieur Dreucourt's foot ſtruck ſomething that ſounded: he picked it up, and perceiving it

to

to be a bracelet, compoſed of gold and jewels; he ſhewed it to D'Aubrun, who inſtantly knew it to be his wife's. Without ſaying a word in reply, he ſnatched the bracelet, and, jumping into the ſea, ſwam towards the neareſt boat: the men in it endeavoured for ſome time to keep him back, till ſeeing him almoſt exhauſted, they threw out a rope and admitted him. In the mean time the other boat, in which was the object of his chace, got much a-head; and having reached the veſſel it belonged to, the ſeveral perſons were taken on board, and the ſhip got under ſail.

It was not till D'Aubrun had been ſome time on board the other ſhip, that he could attempt explaining his intereſt in what had been done, and even then he found himſelf not at all underſtood. The language of the mariners was the jargon of Venice, and no language worth acquiring was intelligible to them.

At

At length a prieſt appeared, who ſpoke Latin; to him the Baron told his tale, which the reſt heard repeated with demonſtrations of concern. They ſaid they had from their ſhips ſeen the lady on ſhore, who made ſignals of diſtreſs, which induced them to ſend their boats to her relief: that thoſe who had landed ſoon diſcovered by her geſtures that ſhe was in fear of purſuit, and that they had repulſed the Baron and his friend under the ſuppoſition that it was from them ſhe fled. They added, that they would now do their utmoſt to come up with the other veſſel; and comforted him by ſaying, that even ſhould they not be able to join her ſooner, they muſt certainly meet at Leghorn, where they were to make a ſtay of ſome days.

Night now came on, and with it a ſtorm ſo dreadful as to awe the moſt daring. From the looks of thoſe about him, D'Aubrun diſcovered that the crew

crew were in great anxiety: he enquired of the Prieſt what was the cauſe of it, and learnt that they were very apprehenſive for the ſafety of their conſort, which the ſtorm had extremely crippled.

After beating about at the mercy of the winds and waves till day-break, the ſtorm abating, they ſet themſelves to recover the courſe they had been drawn from. To the Baron's frequent enquiries whether the other veſſel was in ſight, a negative had been often returned; but about two hours after ſunriſe ſhe was diſcerned from the maſt-head, and he was flattered with the hope that, as ſhe ſeemed to have ſuffered moſt, they might ſoon reach her.

In this horrid ſtate of impatience and ſuſpence was D'Aubrun when his friendly interpreter came to him, and with an aſpect not at all encouraging, told him

they

they were again in danger, for that three veſſels, belonging, as was believed, to the piratical ſtates, were making ſail towards them. D'Aubrun went on deck, and ſaw theſe ſhips bearing down, one on the conſort, one toward the veſſel he was on board of, and the third ſtanding off as if to aſſiſt either in caſe of ſuperior oppoſition.

A ſhort time determined the fate of the Chriſtians; reſiſtance was vain; the Moors boarded both veſſels, and having put the crews and paſſengers in irons, ſailed with them for Tunis, to which place they belonged.

The wind was contrary, and the veſſel which the Baron was in made little or no way. The ſtorm that ſeemed huſhed by the return of day, waked again at its departure, and came on with increaſed violence. All around, nothing was to be heard but the warring elements, and

diſtreſs

diſtreſs and confuſion. D'Aubrun was then in the hold, with as many more as could be ſtowed there: his interpreter was of this number. A great noiſe was heard above; ſhrieks and groans filled the air. In about half an hour two of the principal Moors came down to ſee if the place would contain any more priſoners, and from their converſation the Venetians learnt, and the Prieſt informed D'Aubrun, that the conſort was on fire, and that they were endeavouring to ſave a part of her crew.

On board this veſſel was the Counteſs de Lubonne!!—Not all the horror that environed her huſband could detach this circumſtance from his immediate recollection. He ſunk under it, and a delirium enſued which rendered him inſenſible to all the calamities he was threatened with.

In this ſtate of alternate ſtupor and raving

raving we muſt leave the Baron, and return to his no leſs unhappy friend, the Seigneur de Canbruy, who made no delay in ſetting out for Saltzburg, in Germany, whither he had learnt, when in Switzerland, his ſon had been conveyed.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXX.

IT had been De Canbruy's intention to leave his Bohemian boy with the Chevalier Dreucourt; but this deſign was obſtructed by the earneſtneſs of the little lad to accompany him. It was impoſſible to make him underſtand the reaſonableneſs of his reſolution, and almoſt as difficult to prevail on him by force, without making him ſuffer grievouſly. At length his tears and begging attitudes pleaded ſo eloquently for him, that his patron agreed to indulge him, notwithſtanding ſo uſeleſs and helpleſs an attendant muſt be a conſiderable inconvenience in a journey. The ſervant De Canbruy had choſen to accompany him

ever

ever ſince his leaving the Duke de Melluis' caſtle, was the man who had been his compaſſionate jailor, and he undertook the no little troubleſome charge of the Bohemian.

No means yet made uſe of had prevailed on this boy to deſiſt from repeating the direful name of Almeric Zulig. If his patron ſmiled, he ſmiled too, and uttered it with an energy that made it ſtabbing. If he ſaw him penſive, he would cry 'Poor Almeric,' as if he meant to awaken his tenderneſs towards him.

After this heavy addition to his burden of ſorrow, De Canbruy thought it uſeleſs to enquire while he remained in the kingdom of France. His firſt buſineſs was in Franche Comté, and his eagerneſs to gain the place of Bertolda's reſidence made him expedite his journey to a degree that ill ſuited the puerile vigour

vigour of his Bohemian, who, on the ſecond day after his ſetting out, became too ill to travel. His maſter's impatience could not give way to this untoward hindrance: he left him behind with his ſervant at a village near the road, and gave directions for his being removed back to the Chevalier Dreucourt's as ſoon as he recovered.

He now proceeded alone in his journey, and having reached Satins, in Franche Comté, made every poſſible enquiry and ſearch there for his wife, of whom he could get no better tidings than that ſhe had left the place in queſt, as it was believed, of the friends of a little girl ſhe kept with her: that ſhe had ſuffered much through poverty and ſickneſs, and, after having lived in decent privacy, had departed in a deplorable condition.

From this place De Canbruy, whoſe ſorrows

ſorrows ſeemed to increaſe as he travelled, bent his courſe towards Bavaria, and arrived on the confines of Germany. Night overtaking him in a place where was no convenient retreat, he was compelled to ſeek ſhelter in a cottage. A woman met him at the humble door, and, to his requeſt for leave to lodge there, replied that ſhe would willingly accommodate him, or any traveller; but that at that juncture it was impoſſible, as her huſband lay at the point of death, and they had but one bed.

De Canbruy, too much fatigued to think of going farther without reſt, anſwered, that he could ſhift with an indifferent ſubſtitute for a bed, provided he might lie down in ſecurity. He was then readily admitted; but was at firſt a little ſtartled at perceiving that, the cottage conſiſting of but one apartment, he muſt paſs the night with the dying man, whoſe ſighs and groans, and grievous

ous interjections declared his mind to be as ill at eaſe as his body, and ſeemed to defy even the drowſy god himſelf to nod.

The broken ſentences he uttered drew the attention of his gueſt, and the lamentations he poured forth excited his compaſſion. He tenderly enquired of the woman what was her huſband's diſeaſe: ſhe ſhook her head, and replied, ſhe feared it was an incurable diſeaſe, a broken heart.

As ſhe herſelf appeared too ignorant to afford conſolation to a ſufferer under ſuch circumſtances, De Canbruy's humanity prompted him to addreſs himſelf to the dying man, which he did in ſuch accents as ſoon encouraged him to reveal the cauſe of his lamentation.

'It is by my own folly and wickedneſs, Sir,' ſaid the miſerable wretch,

' that I am brought to this ſtate. Had I been contented with what I could get by honeſt induſtry, I might have been happy and in health; but I muſt be rich by any means, and you ſee the conſequence of my toil.

' I was born to labour; but very early in life conceived an averſion for it. I therefore ſought for a way of life that ſhould afford me an eaſy maintenance, and the ſervile condition of a dependant was that which firſt offered itſelf to my acceptance. After ſhifting from ſituation to ſituation, roving from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom, I engaged to attend, as a common ſervant, a Swiſs burgher: he died; and on his death bed, gave to my charge a child of his nephew's, who, on ſome domeſtic misfortunes, had quitted the country.'

Here ceaſed the breath of the relator, when his hearer was burning with impa-

tience. It was in appearance an age before he could reſume his narrative. At length, after many efforts, he went on :

'With this child there was bequeathed to my truſt a conſiderable ſum of money, which I was to carry with him to a family of the name of Graffner at Saltzburg.'—'Good Heaven,' exclaimed De Canbruy; 'is it poſſible? Can chance, or rather an all-directing Providence, have conducted me hither to learn the ſad ſtory of my own child? Proceed inſtantly in thy recital; for ſhould the pains of death ſeize thee ere thou haſt ſatisfied my enquiries, the ſhades of Hell will ſcarce protect thee from my fury.'

The vehemence of the father ſo diſconcerted and terrified the dying man, that he had ſcarce power to add another word to his imperfect account. His wife ſtrove to revive him with a little

ſorry wine, and De Canbruy was impatiently waiting its effect, when a noiſe was heard at the door of the cottage, followed by an earneſt requeſt for admittance.

The woman being ſtill buſied about her huſband, De Canbruy opened the door, and with aſtoniſhment beheld his ſervant and the Bohemian boy, whom he had left on the road with orders to return to the Chevalier Dreucourt's. Vexed at the inconvenient intruſion, and at the precarious ſtate of his incomplete narrative, he ſaid haſtily, 'I wiſh I had left this boy where I found him.' The ſervant excuſed his diſobedience of his orders, by ſaying, that the boy had ſtolen away to follow him. The child, as if he underſtood perfectly the force of De Canbruy's words, burſting into tears, repeated, 'Poor Almeric Zulig:'—the ear of the ſick man caught the ſound; he ſtarted up, and begged to ſee the perſon

perſon who had uttered thoſe words: the Bohemian was accordingly led to his bed-ſide; the man ſurveyed him attentively by the light of a lamp, and falling into a ſtrange commotion, ſuddenly ſwooned away.

CHAP. XXIV.

WHAT was De Canbruy to infer from all this?—What was it but a confirmation of the narrative as far as he had heard it?—At the inſtant when the name of Almeric Zulig was mentioned, his ſenſes had quitted him! Perhaps the poor wretch ſuppoſed the name to be pronounced by Almeric himſelf, and his diſappointment had overcome him.

On recovering, he again deſired to ſee the boy, whom he now examined ſtill more carefully. 'I am much miſtaken,' ſaid he, 'if this child is what he appears to be: let ſome one take him, as ſoon as it is light, to the next town, and

and let the apothecary there try the colour of his ſkin. In the mean time, Sir, I will tell you the reſt of my ſtory, and God grant I may live to witneſs the event I hope for.'

De Canbruy, ſcarce knowing what he heard or might believe, ordered his ſervant to do as he was directed, in the morning. The Bohemian then lying down cloſe to the feet of his patron, ſoon ſunk into ſleep, and the relator went on with his tale.

'Being tempted by the largeneſs of the ſum of money I was entruſted with, which I thought would enable me to live in indolence, I conceived the horrid deſign of making away with the child. I ſet out with him on the journey; and was ruminating on the means of getting rid of this impediment to my being rich, when a troop of Bohemian gypſies came in ſight. To them I ſold him; for

for which atrocious act of treachery and cruelty I am now ſuffering all the tortures of remorſe.' He could ſay no more; but, wringing De Canbruy's hand, he wept bitterly. His hearer continued ſome minutes in profound thought, and then having duly weighed all the concurring circumſtances, and being ſtrongly inclined to hope that his Bohemian might turn out to be, indeed, his Almeric, his impatience got the better of his regard to the boy's repoſe, and he called him to him by the name he had been ſo fond of articulating: his readineſs in anſwering the call increaſed the father's hope, who having learnt the way to the town, though it wanted ſome hours of day-break, ſet off with him himſelf to make the experiment which ſhould cruſh or eſtabliſh his hopes.

Having found the place and the perſon he enquired for, he with ſome difficulty

culty perſuaded the apothecary to riſe and ſatisfy his curioſity. A lotion was prepared and applied for a conſiderable time, but removed nothing of the ſwarthy hue of the boy's ſkin. De Canbruy then recounted the circumſtances that had ſuggeſted the experiment. 'If you have theſe ſtrong ſuſpicions,' ſaid the man of medicine, 'I can perhaps get you farther ſatisfaction: bring the boy with me, and we will go to one of the gypſy crew, who has fallen ſick in this neighbourhood: ſhe ſpeaks their cant in perfection, and a little money will, I am ſure, prevail on her to aſk the boy ſuch queſtions as will diſcover all he knows of his ſituation.'

To the hag they went: ſhe was at firſt ſullen, but ſoon rendered docile. The boy, at ſight of her, clung to his patron, terrified exceſſively, repeating to himſelf, 'No Almeric Zulig now:—I be whipped—Me Benador now indeed.'

deed.' Theſe words, which the watchful De Canbruy remarked, were a proof that compulſion had been uſed to prevent his revealing his real name, and accounted for his never having repeated it till he was encouraged by hearing it.

The woman, having queſtioned the boy as ſhe was prompted, got from him anſwers that confirmed all the former intelligence. She then furniſhed the queriſts with a liquid which immediately blanched Almeric's complexion, and De Canbruy, in this novel joy forgetting the bitter remnant of his ſorrows, returned delighted to the cottage of the ſick man; but the miſerable wretch had expired a few minutes before.

When De Canbruy's firſt raptures were over, the remembrance how imperfect was his joy, ſtruck his unguarded heart more forcibly than ever.

Bertolda

Bertolda was yet unfound, and unheard of!—where next ſhould he ſeek her?—In his way back to the Chevalier Dreucourt's he again viſited Satins; but it availed not. In the utmoſt perplexity to determine what courſe to take, he reached the hoſpitable houſe he had departed from.

Monſieur Dreucourt was returned, and gave him diſtreſſing intelligence of the ſituation in which he had laſt ſeen the Baron, ſwimming to overtake the boat. De Canbruy preſented Almeric to the friendly family, and having related what had befallen him, was in his turn requeſted to be a hearer. 'We have,' ſaid Madame Dreucourt, 'a young woman now in the houſe, whoſe ſtory at firſt inclined us to think her the Counteſs de Lubenne; but in this we have reaſon to believe ourſelves miſtaken: perhaps if you would ſee her you could determine the queſtion: ſhe came

came here accidentally yeſterday, and being in diſtreſs, we invited her to ſtay. —May I call her in?'

De Canbruy had ſcarce given his ready aſſent when the room door opened, and in came a woman, not, indeed, the Counteſs de Lubenne; but Bertolda Zulig. She led a little girl, whom Madame Dreucourt, delighted with his ſpeechleſs rapture, introduced to his notice as the daughter of Baron d'Aubrun.

The joy of ſuch a meeting is painted on the imagination in colours too fugacious for the pen or pencil.

Bertolda had wandered long in ſearch of the Counteſs, and applying at the Chevalier's for leave to ſhelter for the night, had been diſcovered by the humane curioſity of Julie. To her huſband's kind reproaches for her having ſo long ſuf-

fered

fered him to continue in an error, ſhe replied briefly, that at firſt her promiſe had kept her ſilent, and that afterward it never happened that ſhe knew where to apply to him when ſhe could have produced Madame de Lubenne for her juſtification.

Nothing now was to be wiſhed for but tidings of the Baron and his unfortunate Lady. A few weeks reſtored Bertolda to health and vivacity, and all the family ſeemed called to a new exiſtence. Their joy was ſoon intelligible to young Almeric, who readily regained his native language, and as if ſympathetically touched, attached himſelf with all the energy of infancy to the gentle fair whom Providence ſeemed to have preſerved for him.

The foundationleſs hope of ſoon hearing news of the Baron, alone detained De Canbruy at the Chevalier's, who,

with his ſon and daughter-in law, had conſented to accompany him to his new poſſeſſions; when one afternoon, invited by the fineneſs of the weather, they all together ſtrolled to the ſea-ſhore, near which the houſe was ſituated. The pleaſure they derived from the ſcene around them was preſently abated by the ſight of a ſhip in great diſtreſs. After watching her ſome minutes, without a poſſibility of giving her any aſſiſtance, they perceived the long-boat thrown out: eight perſons had taken to it, when the ſhip rolling violently, went down, carrying the boat with it. The beholders on ſhore, ſcarcely able to endure the ſcene, and yet too much intereſted to remove from it, ſtood aghaſt with horror. At laſt Monſieur Dreucourt called out, 'Here is one man ſaved; he ſwims towards us ſtoutly:' he then ran back to the houſe, and having called ſome of the ſervants to aſſiſt with whatever could facilitate his getting

to ſhore, he returned to the beach, and juſt ſaved him as his ſtrength was failing.

While means were uſing for his reſtoration, the ſea waſhed to the ſhore many of the lighter pieces of the wreck, and the bodies of two perſons, a man and a woman, whom even death had not been able to ſeparate: ſhe was embraced in his arms, and he claſped her as cloſely as poſſible. At the inſtant that the wave threw them on the ſands, De Canbruy cried out,—'Tis my friend,'—and dropped on the corpſes. The female ſufferer was almoſt as ſoon known to Bertolda for Madame de Lubenne: all their endeavours to reſtore either failed, and they had only the mournful ſatisfaction of hearing from the ſailor, whom they had ſaved, that the ſhip was Engliſh, and had fallen in with three Mooriſh and two Venetian veſſels, juſt as one of the latter was blowing up:

that they had made the Moors priſoners, and ſaved all the Chriſtians, with whom they were making their way to the port of Marſeilles.

There now remained nothing within the power of De Canbruy and his friends, but to give honourable interment to the unfortunate pair, and to guard the intereſts of the young orphan. The former of theſe offices being duly performed, De Canbruy ſet out for Chateau d'Aubrun to apprize the domeſtics of what had befallen their lord and lady, and to ſecure their property for their daughter. In the Baron's cloſet there he found a writing addreſſed to himſelf, executed at a time when he was abſent from the place, by which, in caſe of his death, he bequeathed his eſtates, firſt to his wife, then to his child, and, ſhould they never be found, to De Canbruy. A letter accompanied this deed, wherein he requeſted this faithful friend to take

charge of his daughter, if ſhe ſhould be recovered after his deceaſe, and expreſſed an earneſt wiſh that an union between Almeric and Creſcence might cement the intereſts of the families.

A deep melancholy for ſome months overſhadowed the ſuſceptible mind of De Canbruy; but this at length giving way, was ſucceeded by philoſophic tranquillity. What he had ſuffered himſelf, had taught him the fallibility of human judgement, and the misfortunes of his friend held out this valuable leſſon, that he who is driven by exceſſive zeal from the ſtraight paths of moderation and charity, will ſooner or later feel that he is ſinning under the appearance of virtue.

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